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The Week-end Review

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CONTENTS

COMMENTS . . . . . . Page 365
PARTY LINE 367
THE SUCCESSORS OF KRUPP 367
DOLLARS AND FILMS. By Woodrow Wyatt, M.P. 368
A LONDON DIARY. By Critic 369
SET TO PARTNERS. By Sagittarius . . . 369
THIS ENGLAND 369
WANTED—AN AGRICULTURAL POLICY. . . . 370
SOUTH AFRICA'S ELECTION. By Charles Bokkie 370
LIVING IN JERUSALEM. By Diana Gillon . . 371
THE OLD LOOK. By William Plomer . . 372
THE ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT:
  Something New. By Desmond Shawe-Taylor 372
  The Theatre. By T. C. Worsley . . . 372
  Radio Notes. By William Salter . . . 373
  The Movies. By William Whitebait . . 373
CORRESPONDENCE 374
  From W. E. P. Johnson; Richard Keppel; R. B. Hamilton; Norman Bentwich; Avrid Pardo; Archibald Robertson; Dr. H. Mann-
CORRESPONDENCE—*continued* Page
  heim; Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University; and Lucjan Blit.
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By V. S. Pritchett . . 377
REVIEWS:
  Commination. By Edward Sackville West . 378
  Ordeal By Planning. By Hugh Weeks . . 378
  A Bovaryst. By Raymond Mortimer . . 378
  Roosevelt. By John Morton . . . 379
  New Novels. By P. H. Newby . . . 380
  Ballerina. By Beryl de Zoete . . . 381
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS 382

MACHINES AND MEN

THE Tory press naturally gave Mr. Shinwell a fine show for his speech to the Co-operative Congress, in which he said that the Labour Party's schemes of nationalisation had been inadequately thought out in advance. This reception was not due to any agreement with what Mr. Shinwell was setting out to say; for his plea was that public ownership would not get the right response from the workers in the industries affected until it was accompanied by a real measure of industrial democracy that would give them a sense of responsible partnership in a communal enterprise. His speech was featured because it could be used as a stick to beat both nationalisation and the Labour Party as its exponent. Opposition newspapers were quick to draw the moral that, on a Labour Minister's own admission, much more "thinking out" would be necessary before there could be any question of bringing steel under public ownership or control.

For those who wish to understand, Mr. Shinwell's speech, despite its tactical indiscretions, conveys a real warning. Things are not well with the administration of the National Coal Board, where a battle royal is in progress over the vital problems of labour management and the amount of responsibility the workers are to be given. The trouble arises, not because the issues were not thought about in advance—on the contrary, they were debated at one Trades Union Congress and at one Labour Party Conference after another in the 'thirties—but because no real agreement could be reached upon them. One section of the Labour Party leadership held an essentially bureau-cum-technocrat conception of the management of nationalised industries, and this section in the main got its way in the structure of the National Coal Board and of the other Boards and Commissions set up under the Acts nationalising the various services. This section had the support, not only of Trade Unionists who wished to prevent the Unions from becoming involved in a share of responsibility for the industries concerned, but also to some extent of the Communists, who tend to regard "workers' control" as a dangerous departure from the principle of "democratic centralism." On the other side, the Trade Unionists, who wanted a share in control and were prepared to take responsibility with it, had no organised group to co-ordinate their ideas, and were fairly easily side-tracked in the discussions at which the Party plans were approved.

The result is that, to take the case of the N.C.B. only, the miners have no sense of anything really *different* under public ownership, or of having become responsible partners in the industry. They have been fobbed off with "joint consultation," which, as Mr. Shinwell said, will not work unless the men who have to do the consulting want it and are prepared to treat it seriously. In the N.C.B. set-up, each Region and each Area within each Region has a Labour Controller, who is supposed to be primarily responsible for labour relations. But each Region and each Area has also a general manager, or controller, who is the superior in the hierarchy of the corresponding Labour Controller. Unless the Area Labour Controller can go straight to the Regional Labour Controller—and he in turn to the centre—even against the views of the Area general manager, the labour factor is bound to be subordinated right through to the technical factor; for the general managers at each level are mainly technicians. Such subordination, however, cuts right across all ideas of workers' responsibility and control; for most of the technical men, coming over from capitalist industry, inherit the notions which belong to capitalist management and lack all belief in the virtues of industrial democracy. It is to be noted that both the French and the Czechs, in their socialisation schemes, have brought the Trade Unions directly into the management, and have placed a real responsibility (not merely a formal right to consultation) in the workers' hands.

Mr. Shinwell is right in holding that this entire problem needs thinking out again. The moral is not that the Labour Party ought to go slow generally with nationalisation: the N.C.B., whatever its faults, is undoubtedly very much superior to the private "enterprise" which it superseded. Still less is there any case for postponing the Steel Bill—particularly since the form of nationalisation contemplated for that industry is not, we understand, of the bureaucratic Coal Board type. Public control over steel policy seems likely to be secured by the State's acquisition of the equity capital of the major concerns, leaving the structure which the industry has developed intact and providing for substantial decentralisation of management. The moral, which applies to coal and steel alike, is that the Government must go fast towards democracy in the industries it takes over, and must recognise that the key industries need a new *human* structure before they can be expected to work aright. As Mr. Shinwell said—Nationalisation is not Socialism: it becomes Socialism only when it is combined with responsible industrial democracy at every level.

Western Germany

Mr. Bevin had little of a positive nature to communicate to the Commons this week about the future shape of Western Germany; and little in the way of concrete decisions has yet emerged from the Six-Power Conference in London. The broad lines of the Anglo-American plan for Western Germany are, indeed, sufficiently well known: on September 1 a constituent assembly is to meet, from whose deliberations there is to derive a semi-sovereign German Government in Frankfurt claiming authority over the whole Reich. After that Government is in being—and not, as originally planned, before its inauguration—an "Occupation Statute" is to be proclaimed by the Allies, defining the limited reserve powers which they will continue to exercise, mainly over defence and foreign policy. The delays which have occurred in the announcement by the London Conference of agreement on this plan have been due, it appears, to opposition from France, whose delegates are complaining with some bitterness that the British, in following passively the American line, are completely neglectful of French and European security. The French seem to be ready to waive their original objection to any form of central (as opposed to federal) government in Bizonia, though they attach more weight than does the U.S. State Department to the risks involved in giving the U.S.S.R. a case for establishing a rival all-German government in Berlin. They remain, however, profoundly apprehensive at the prospect of a dollar-financed rehabilitation of the war potential of the Ruhr subject to no international control except over the allocation of exports of coal, coke and steel. How justifiable such French fears are may be judged from the report on Western Germany by a special correspondent published on a later page of this issue. By acquiescing in measures, both of commission and omission, whose objective is primarily to fit a reconstructed Western Germany into the pattern of the American Century, the British Foreign Secretary seems in danger of forgetting that German reconstruction is still primarily a European fear and a European problem. The British Government will do well to remember that the kind of Western Union we get depends on British leadership.

No Change in Palestine

Mr. Bevin's statement on Palestine would seem on the face of it to exclude any change of British policy after May 15th. Since Britain will only share responsibility in enforcing a truce agreed by both sides, and since such a truce, except in the case of Jerusalem, is inconceivable, it can be assumed fairly confidently that, despite the discussions at Lake Success, May 15th will see the official promulgation of a Jewish State and the beginning of the second round of the struggle. The last-minute suggestion of King Abdullah that the Jews should be content with full rights of citizenship in an Arab State has negligible chances of acceptance. Though few Jews or Arabs will believe it, there seems no reason to doubt that the reinforcements which arrived last week are genuinely designed to cover the British withdrawal. Fighting units are required to protect the Headquarters Staff and non-combatant personnel who are desperately trying to salvage as much as possible of the valuable equipment which was transferred to Palestine at the time of our decision to leave Egypt. But where is our main Middle East base to be? No final decision has been reached, but the grandiose plan for a retreat to Kenya and the Sudan seems to have been abandoned, and barracks are being hastily erected in Cyrenaica and Libya, the only territory from which the re-occupation of Egypt—essential in any war—can be speedily carried out.

The Strength of the Lords

At first sight the all-party conference on Lords Reform seems to have broken down on a small difference of three months Should the Lords be allowed to hold up the passage of a Bill into law for nine months from its Third Reading in the Commons, or twelve months? In reality this issue represents the fundamental cleavage between the Government and the Opposition in their approach to the problem. With twelve months, the Lords could hold up any Bill introduced during the fourth session of a Parliament (such as the Steel Bill, presumably scheduled for next autumn) until after the subsequent General Election. With nine months, they could only get Bills presented in the last session postponed until after an election. The Government concedes the value of a delaying period which gives public opinion an opportunity to declare itself, and in the light of which an Administration may be disposed to modify its original proposals. The Opposition wish to retain the bite of a veto power as well as its bark. This, once the Lords had been reformed on the agreed lines suggested, might easily be more dangerous than the present two-year delay period. To-day, the safeguard which protects the Government from the wrath of the Lords is their consciousness that they are a motley collection who cannot reasonably be claimed to represent a cross-section of the public. Reconstituted, they would be emboldened to use powers which to-day they handle as gingerly as they would an explosive likely to damage themselves as much as anyone else. It is difficult also to believe that with Bishops, Liberals, Hereditary Peers and men of "public distinction" included, a revised Second Chamber would not always give a majority to an anti-Labour front. The Government is wise to have none of reform until the delaying power is reduced from a powerful piece of political machinery to a symbol.

Clothes and Coupons

There may well be a case for greater flexibility in the coupon values of clothing; but there is little justification in the current demand for the sweeping away of clothes rationing in order to clear the accumulations, of which there appears to be considerable evidence, of unsold stocks. It is apt to be forgotten that the present glut in the shops of some articles of clothing is not due solely to shortage of coupons but is the product of several factors. On the one hand, goods have piled up because, though made for export, they could not be sold owing to import restrictions abroad. On the other hand, increased prices, as a result of the termination of subsidies, have undoubtedly curtailed effective working-class demand; indeed, it is by no means certain that more than a small proportion of the population could afford to buy more clothes even if there were a general de-rationing. If sluggish stocks in the home market are to be moved quickly, there will have to be considerable price reductions, as well as the "down-pointing" of articles in terms of coupons. But in any case, is the glut more than temporary? In six or twelve months' time the effect of switching a higher proportion of textiles into export will be seen in the shops; and it would be improvident to dissipate present stocks—at any rate of goods not greatly affected by fashion changes—with the possibility of further shortage in sight. As for the prospect of unemployment in the clothing trades catering for the home market, why not admit that this is an essential element in the deflationary side of the Cripps Plan?

The W.F.T.U.

It looks, at the time of writing, as if the World Federation of Trade Unions may hold together, at any rate for a while longer. The Committee of Six which has been discussing the future of the Federation, has reached agreement on a number of issues affecting the management of its affairs, though ticklish points have still to be faced, including the question of accepting the new *Force Ouvrière* in France as an affiliated body. M. Saillant will resign from the secretaryship of the French C.G.T. and will thus no longer double the parts of responsibility to one Communist-dominated body and to one which is attempting to straddle the two trade union worlds. Renewed promises are to be given that no one delegation will attempt to dominate the Federation; and no further manifestos are to be issued in its name without prior consultation with the movements representing the rival tendencies. The trouble, it will be remembered, developed in part over the May Day manifesto denouncing the Marshall Plan and Western Union, which was issued without any knowledge on the part of the British or American members of the Bureau. At bottom, the real question is whether the Soviet Union wishes to keep the Federation alive and is prepared to refrain from trying to use it as an instrument of Communist propaganda against the West. The Italians have a strong interest in its survival because, if it broke, their movement would in all probability split. The Western trade union leaders are also desirous of keeping the W.F.T.U. in being, as long as there is even a small hope of using it to maintain real contact across the iron curtain and to save the more liberal elements in European trade unionism from entire subservience to the Communist Parties.

IN PARLIAMENT: Patient Preparation

Wednesday

THE old magic of the Foreign Secretary worked quickly. One by one, under the spell of his monotone, six members fell asleep, and on the Opposition Front Bench Harold Macmillan was obliged to nudge his somnolent neighbour into a vertical position. Yet the themes of the speech—the collision of Russia and the West, the trembling of the sword in the scabbard, America in Europe and the joining of sixteen nations—would have been great enough at some other time to have kept the House awake and excited.

Perhaps it was the absence of Churchill that diminished the occasion. Perhaps it was the unbroken reading, the pursuit of every cliché ("We don't want to jump out of the frying pan into the fire") and the now familiar lament (If only the sun hadn't got in my eyes . . .) that made an initially full House turn torpid and shrivel. At any rate, this was not the most impressive debate on Foreign Affairs, and neither the Soviet Ambassador nor the Archbishop of York in the gallery seemed able to endure it for long If Churchill was keeping his speech for the Hague Bevin was keeping his for Scarborough.

Recently, the Tories have been showing irritatio with the Foreign Secretary. They would prefer him more bellicose, more decisive, less forbearing. From patience to inertia is but a step; and that's their charge against him. But they know where they are with the present Foreign Secretary; his successor mightn't b so predictable. They therefore are prepared to strike and even to wound, but not to kill. Any rumours t the contrary were quickly set at rest by Butler, who announced his intention of giving the Foreign Secretary a few gentle prods.

Nowadays it is easier to debate Foreign Affair than it used to be, since Russia has been named a the enemy, and the Tories and McGovern can refe to her in that sense without a gasp from the Labou benches. During the first day's debate, Hope an Head described unemotionally some of the militar and strategic conditions of peace or war; they seeme committed to the belief that now only force ca contain Russia. Tufton Beamish supported them i a characteristically emphatic speech, which recalle for many Members the editorials of the *Morning Po* before it expired. His attack on Crossman—Oh tha he were a centipede to have a foot in every Socialis camp—delighted both Crossman and his friends.

By agreement between the Whips, the subject o Western Union was to have been debated only on th second day. But it was hard to divorce Wester Europe from the subject of an overall settlement, an Benn Levy, the first backbench speaker, was quickl involved in the question of whether it was right o wrong to go to the Hague. He made several pro Hague members uneasy when he suggested that wha Socialists and Tories mean by Western Union are tw different and in many ways incompatible things. Th Tories were disappointed. They like a nice famil quarrel in the Labour Party, and this one turned o quieter than they had hoped.

Pritt's lengthy (thirty-three minute) speech was criticism of American policy, in which he argued—though much more cogently than the Russians—th often expressed Soviet case that Marshall Aid selfish in origin, and, in the long run, harmful to tho who are helped. This was a direct challenge to th Foreign Secretary, who had already thanked th American taxpayer for his generosity. The majori of Labour members who welcome Marshall Aid as a act of enlightened self-interest dissented from Pritt unfair over-simplification.

The end of the short debate was brightened, eve for the sour ones who had been chosen but not calle by Gallacher. His speech consisted largely of extrac from the Prime Minister's *Labour in Perspecti* from which he established that, in 1937, the Prin Minister thought that "there was a deep differen of opinion between the Labour Party and t Capitalist Party on foreign as well as on home policy and that "In a party of the Left there should alwa be room for difference of opinion and emphasis."

Wilson Harris also spoke. "Who is that fellow? one Labour back-bencher asked another.

"Him?" replied the other. "He's the editor THE NEW STATESMAN & NATION."

MAURICE EDELMAN

PARTY LINE

The central issue of the Labour Party Conference next month has been conveniently dramatised in the two incidents of the Nenni telegram and the Hague Conference. Twelve months ago it was still possible for Mr. Bevin in his speech at Margate and Mr. Healey in his semi-official pamphlet *Cards on the Table* to talk as though Socialist Britain were still steering a middle course between capitalist America and Communist Russia. But the Russian decision to oppose in every possible way the Marshall Plan has forced Britain, to a much greater extent than Labour desired, into the American camp. This year more of the cards are really on the table. Britain, as the initiator and leader of Western Union, relies openly on the sanction of American force to prevent Russian expansion in Europe; and the British Labour Party has taken up the challenge of the Cominform in the struggle for the soul of the European Labour Movement. The decision to back Signor Saragat against the Nenni Socialists was the first act of overt political warfare by Transport House. Previously Mr. Morgan Phillips had sought in private conference to persuade the Italian Socialists to withdraw from the Popular Front. A few weeks before the election he deliberately backed the small Saragat group against the official Party—and achieved a considerable measure of success.

The Nenni telegram deliberately and provocatively challenged this declaration of political warfare against the Cominform. Most of its signatories conscientiously believed that a victory for the Italian Popular Front was preferable to a victory for the Vatican. They still hope that the unity of the working-class movement can be maintained or restored, and their opposition to the official Party line is based on the principle that in countries where, as in Eastern Europe, Italy and France, the Communists have gained control of the trade unions, that control should not be challenged by direct assault. The British Labour Party and the Labour Government should not align themselves with capitalist America against "the revolutionary working-class movement"; but should accept the fact that in certain countries the Communists have earned the leadership they exert and should seek to collaborate with them.

This position has been argued in these columns on many occasions by Mr. Zilliacus. In propounding it, he can point to Labour policy between the wars with regard to Spain, to the record of the Resistance Movement and to certain passages in the Party's 1945 statement of international policy. In the battle against Facism no one questioned the necessity of Socialist-Communist collaboration. How then, Mr. Zilliacus can fairly ask, is it right and proper, in a period when reactionary forces are definitely regaining strength, for the Labour Party to take the lead in breaking up popular fronts and demanding European Socialists that they adopt an independent position between the contending ideologies? And how can this independence of Socialist Parties be squared with the admitted dependence of the Brussels Powers on American military strength and American economic aid and with the presence of British Socialists at the Hague Conference?

These are questions which merit a much more serious answer than any hitherto given. The National Executive will of course be able to muster the customary overwhelming card vote at Scarborough; and Mr. Bevin can count on almost unanimous support if the issue of confidence is ever raised in the House of Commons. But such victories are barren if they are won only by the passive support of those delegates and M.P.s who are content to leave foreign policy to their leaders. What matters is whether the politically conscious minority of Socialists throughout the country, who do the work of propaganda and organisation, are genuinely convinced of the rightness of the Party line. It is not sufficient that they should be swept away by a feat of oratory in the Conference room, or half-heartedly accept the need of discipline and unity in the year before an election. They must understand the policy in all its implications and conscientiously believe that it is a Socialist policy.

What is needed to achieve this is not merely a series of *ad hoc* decisions on special issues but a clear and reasoned re-statement of the Party's international policy. At the moment the loyal Socialist is at a loss. The Communists and their friends have a powerful and well-documented Party line. Transport House seems to be content with a series of negative commandments—"Thou shalt not encourage Nenni," "Thou shalt not go to The Hague"—which belong to a political Deuteronomy, while Mr. Attlee and Mr. Bevin are so intent on a host of current problems that they have so far been unable to give a lead to a movement disturbed by the apparent contradictions of Government policy and its divergence from the line established in Opposition between the wars. To denounce the Communists is not sufficient; and, anyway, Mr. Churchill has already achieved a monopoly in this field.

Despite the overwhelming power of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. and the consequent attraction of their rival ideologies, the world desperately needs a democratic Socialist philosophy of which Britain can become the chief protagonist. In this sense the Third Force must be the objective of the Labour Party's international policy. It does not exist as yet, because its components are scattered, disunited and weak. But it can be created on one condition—that the Marshall Plan is developed according to the principles laid down in the Harvard speech, and is not distorted into a Maginot Plan.

We are back at the central issue raised by the Nenni telegram. What should be the Socialist attitude to Communists and Communism? It is impossible to avoid drawing one conclusion from the experience of the last three years. Though it was right and necessary between 1933 and 1945 to accept unity of working-class action in resistance to Fascism, collaboration with Communists in a government is a risk no Socialist can now accept. The history of Eastern Europe, culminating in the Communist coup in Prague, shows that the Socialist cannot survive in a coalition dominated by Communists; and, if he is the stronger, as in Britain and Austria, he does not need the Communists in the Cabinet. The Socialist may believe that he can make a tactical alliance and that he will, if a crisis comes, be as quick on the draw as his Communist rival. But his democratic philosophy makes this impossible. In a revolutionary situation, the man who believes in parliamentary democracy will always be defeated by a Cabinet colleague, whether Fascist or Communist, for whom Parliament is a bourgeois bauble. In the underground struggle against the oppressor unity was possible: in establishing a stable democratic government it is not.

If, however, the Socialist is forced to refuse collaboration with the Communists, what should his attitude be to the Parties of the Right and the Centre? Is the French Socialist, for instance, to veer away from the Scylla of Duclos only to fall a victim to a Gaullist Charybdis? Or is he to steer a course of pure and impotent independence? How should the German S.P.D. approach the problem of a coalition with the reactionary C.D.U.? Should Saragat join forces with de Gasperi? Or, to put the issue in its most generalised form, is the Socialist to refuse collaboration in the formation of a Western Union if he knows that it cannot be Socialist?

On this point the practice of Mr. Bevin and the edicts of Mr. Phillips are in remarkable divergence. While Mr. Phillips deplores the participation of British Socialists in the Hague Conference, Mr. Bevin is ready to collaborate in Paris with governments which have even less interest in Socialism than Mr. Churchill.

At Scarborough some effort should be made to reconcile the Party line with Government policy. What is necessary for this is a recognition of the difference between British parliamentary democracy and that of every other Western European State. Coalition is the natural and usual form of European democracy: it is alien to the British tradition. The Labour Party is not a Socialist Party on the Continental model, but includes a diversity of groups and interests stretching right round from the Centre to the far Left. In terms of domestic politics it is essential for the Party to maintain and to increase its fight against Conservatism and to give no hint of a Coalition mind. Hence Morgan Phillips' dislike of Socialist participation at The Hague. Yet in its approach to Western Union the Labour Government must face the realities of European politics. It cannot avoid working with parties of a different persuasion, who happen to be in power abroad, if the new structure indispensable for Western Europe is to be created. What it must do is to exert every effort to win power for Socialism within the Union established.

THE SUCCESSORS OF KRUPP

[By a Special Correspondent]

"This loan will give us 300,000 Americans prepared to make propaganda on our behalf, because they will be interested in the well-being of Germany." Thus Stresemann in 1924 when the Dawes Plan was almost in the bag. Twenty-four years later the supreme German authority in the Western Zones—admittedly not yet a government—could ask the United States for 2 billion dollars with the comfortable assurance that the Marshall Plan would afford them at least half as much besides the promise of more to come. With this advance the State of Western Germany is ready to make its bow upon the international stage. If the promotion is American, the driving force, as Stresemann saw in much the same situation a quarter of a century earlier, will be drawn largely from the manner in which the Germans may be able to exploit their value to the Western Allies. It is time to ask which Germans are to rule this new State and exactly what they represent.

Whatever decisions may be taken in the next few months—and the early formation of a provisional government in Frankfurt appears likely—it should be recognised that the three Western Zones already exist as a practical economic unity in partnership with the "Marshall countries." The French may have choked at this breakneck rehabilitation; in the end they have swallowed it. With a population of over 40 millions, this Western Germany commands a bigger industrial potential than any other country in Western Europe except Britain. Given a financial system that is stable within itself and a supply of raw materials, it could soon change the whole picture of European supply and demand. Many of its leading peacetime industries have survived, or, if partly destroyed, have still a larger potential than in the Weimar period before the intensive development of the 'thirties set in.

So much has been made of the desolation of the German scene that many who have looked no deeper than the surface hold the view that Germany must take long years to recover the level of her pre-war output. This view is not well founded. British industrialists who have travelled in Germany since the end of the war have discovered good reason to worry at the future competition of industries expanded by the needs of a war economy far beyond their "normal" capacity. Rayon is a well-known case. British experts have calculated that wartime expansion has swelled the German rayon capacity to a point at which it could produce, if fully worked, over three-quarters of the world's present output. Other light industries are similarly well equipped. The story is different in the Eastern zones, where heavy Russian dismantling has stripped away much of the new plant that Nazi exploitation left behind. In the West there have been few removals of plant. Many war plants scheduled in 1946 for immediate destruction are still intact; a small fraction of the peacetime plants listed for dismantling under the original level-of-industry plan has been taken away. Up to December 31st, 1947, the Inter-Allied Reparation Agency had received only 228 plants for disposal, while the Russians have received little or nothing from the West since General Clay suspended deliveries in May, 1946. Even if the reduced dismantling scheme announced in 1947—cutting by more than half the number of plants to be dismantled—were to be carried out, the Western Allies would have extracted from their zones an insignificant percentage of the reparations paid by the Weimar Republic even before the Dawes and Young Plans came to succour it. This time the American-made moratorium on reparations came, not 13 years after the end of the war, as Hoover's did, but three years after.

There can be little doubt that the West German State will be potentially rich and powerful, capable under favourable conditions of speedily achieving the great industrial output of the middle 'thirties. M. Jacques Rueff, the president of the Inter-Allied Reparation Agency, has argued that "the over-industrialisation of Germany for military purposes has created conditions in which, despite destruction and the exceptional wear-and-tear of war, there remains an industrial potential which in any case, and no matter what may be the outcome of present controversies, is vastly superior to the requirements of a peacetime economy." Nor should it be forgotten that the 1947 level-of-industry plan aimed at allowing Western Germany to recover the high targets of 1936, when the Germans were not only supporting themselves but rearming as well.

It is a commonplace to-day, even among those who used to deny it hotly, that monopolist capital was the key to power in Weimar Germany, and that Hitler without the Krupps and Thyssens could scarcely have achieved power as and when he did. Those who have retained the ownership of monopolist capital in Germany may be expected to continue to call the tune at least until they, in their turn, are overwhelmed by the spirits they evoke. The British Government recognised this when it promised that the heavy industries of the Ruhr and Rhineland should never be returned to their original owners.

The fact remains that military government has refrained from any serious disruption of the pattern of ownership in the Western Zones. Hitler and the land reform in the Eastern Zone have destroyed the Junkers, and we have destroyed Hitler: the big capitalists remain—*der Kaiser geht, die Generäle bleiben.* The postponement and final rejection of the project to socialise the Ruhr coal mines is well known. All that the North German Steel Control in Düsseldorf has done (or could do within its terms of reference) has been to "decartelise" the Steel Union: that is, to detach some twenty companies from the parent trust and call these independent. In truth they are nothing of the kind, since the ownership remains unchanged, and nothing would be simpler than to reunite them once the restraint of Allied presence were withdrawn. To make this simpler still the British gave the responsibility for "decartelisation" to Dinkelbach, one of Flick's leading technicians in the hard years when the Reich Government—before the palmy days which Hitler brought to German heavy industry—first saved the Steel Union from disaster and later restored for a nominal price the shares it bought.

The fate of German assets held in neutral countries offers further evidence that the masters of heavy industry have conserved their substance largely intact. The second annual report of the Reparation Agency shows, for instance, that the Swiss have so far liquidated no more than 2 per cent of the German assets which they themselves admitted were subject to immediate liquidation. The biggest fish to escape the net appears to be the Munich Reinsurance Corporation, the greatest of its kind in the world, accounting in 1939 for 45 per cent of the world's reinsurance business, and so valued a spy for Hitler that no limit was placed on its spendings in foreign exchange. It would seem that the greater part of its foreign holdings are now in process of being cloaked behind neutral straw-men. The core and substance of German monopolist capital, if not the exact superstructure, has yet to be touched.

Two fundamental aspects of the German State which the Western Powers are about to call into being are thus the survival of an industrial potential superior to the peacetime output of Germany in 1936 (assuming no rearmament and allowing for a few gaps where bomb damage may prove irreparable), and the persistence of a pattern of ownership which most authorities would agree was largely responsible for the initial successes of the Nazis. Nor should it be forgotten that the monopolist trend was strengthened under Hitler. One reliable observer has pointed out that the average capital stock of a German corporation was doubled in the period 1933-41; and it is generally acknowledged that the process of concentration went on at a great pace. Heavy industrialists and financiers served in the highest posts of Hitler's Germany. They ran the country. They owned the State. In Western Germany to-day it is not a great exaggeration to say that they (or their straw-men) still own the State. The only difference is that they are not yet running it. Or not quite.

The reasons why West German industry is producing at an average level of little more than one-third of that of 1938 lie deeply embedded in the gritty soil of Allied controversies. Efforts to raise production in the Western Zones, with the partial exception of coal, have failed or have not been made. Official statistics show the general level of industrial productivity in nine months of 1947 to have been 37 per cent of 1938, while agricultural output stood at about 65 per cent. Much of this failure was due to a lack of coal and steel for elementary reconstruction; much else to a shortage of raw materials, to the absence of a stable currency, to "political factors"; and much else again to an understandable wish to postpone German competition in the export market.

Any disputes there may have been between British and American views on the manner and rhythm of German recovery have been settled heavily in American favour, especially now that the Americans control the joint export-import agency for the combined zones. This does not mean that the British have no further responsibility: we have, and we can still wield it to good effect if we choose. The bulk of heavy industry lies within our zone, and Bevin has pledged himself to expropriate the old owners. But it does mean that only a forceful change of policy in favour of Socialism—that is, away from the present policy of drift and surrender—can now save Western Germany from relapsing into extreme reaction. It is late in the day; but it is still just possible. As it is, the drift is ominous. The Americans were determined to secure a staunchly capitalist Germany: to get it they have cancelled reparations, winked at the wholesale cloaking of German assets abroad, protected the ownership of German industry from half-hearted British gestures at socialisation, ensured that German unity shall not be achieved on terms that would allow the Socialist economy of the Eastern Zone to exert an influence on its capitalist neighbours, and, finally, launched this unique resurrection of monopoly upon a flood of dollars more generous even than after 1918. The heirs of Krupp and Thyssen may well feel assured of their inheritance. By no other act of policy are the Americans likely to influence the destinies of Europe as much as by this forbidding achievement.

DOLLARS AND FILMS

TOTTERING from lack of finance and shivering from fear that an exultant Hollywood would romp through its studios tossing bundles of unremitted pound notes in its course, the British film industry badly needed the encouragement it got from Mr. Wilson in the House last Friday. Hollywood cannot use the £10 or £11 million that will accumulate in Britain during the next two years to make films over here without restriction. They will be kept to an agreed level of production of around twelve films a year, and they may not outbid their British rivals for studios, stars and script-writers. That is now clear, and it would have been clear before if American versions of "the full text" had included the conditions that will govern the spending of unremitted sterling.

The surest way by which Hollywood can get its money out of the country remains the buying of the Western Hemisphere distribution rights of British films. A part of the profit made in America stays there in dollars. Any other profit returning to Britain entitles the Americans to draw out an equivalent sum from their blocked sterling that still remains here. And that is precisely what is intended by the Agreement—a stimulus to British film production. It is not Mr. Wilson's fault that the full agreement has not been published up till now. He had to wait for Mr. Johnston to complete some of the details with his friends in America. The delay has given Hollywood the chance to get the wrong impression (and the "pix kings" will now suffer some disappointment). It has also allowed the *Daily Express* to accuse the Government of wasting dollars on unnecessary films when what they have done is to reduce an unavoidable expenditure of 50 million dollars a year to 17 million. Unavoidable, that is to say, unless all our cinemas were to be closed, and the *Express* has not suggested that.

But to restrain Hollywood by preventing the acquisition of British studios by Americans is one thing. To put the British film industry on its feet is another. The City has been bitten by film finance in the past. It watches the growth of the Rank Empire to-day with horrified fascination. Some independent producers are famous for their extravagance, and that queers the market for them all. Asking orthodox financiers to venture into the film world is like asking a Victorian matron to bathe at Brighton with her midriff bare. She may do it, if she's a little tiddly, but she needs an awful lot of coaxing.

That this need not be so is not only a fact but is evidently Mr. Wilson's opinion. With a quota that can be adjusted to guarantee a showing for all reasonable British productions, he is confidently devising machinery to feed money into the open gullet of the film industry. At the same time it is certain that safeguards will be found to stop the gullet swallowing too fast and too greedily; and to make sure that the gullet does not belong to cuckoo. That can best be done by using and adapting an existing agency in the film business to supervise the flow of money under the watchful eye of the Government. The contracts with the producers can contain clauses to limit the cost and to make it in the interest of the film creator to keep their masterpieces cheap. And where is the money to come from? At the moment the most likely candidate is the Finance Corporation for Industry. This uses the resources of private enterprise to invest in industries which, it is agreed with the Government, need reconstruction and bolstering. Mr. Wilson has so far committed himself as to say that finance of some kind will be provided. If private enterprise has grown too timid to take the plunge, Mr. Wilson will be obliged to use his powers, possibly under Section II of the Borrowing Control Act, to supply the money himself. The instant he does this, there is no doubt that British independent film production can substantially increase its output and take advantage of the opportunity given it by the Film Agreement to get a foothold in America.

WOODROW WYATT

A LONDON DIARY

Blood calls for blood. In Athens the Minister of Justice, responsible for executing hundreds of his countrymen, has himself been killed by a bomb. Another hundred and fifty imprisoned partisans now follow him to his grave. Even the Foreign Office expresses horror at this new massacre under our aegis. With their up-to-date American equipment, the Greek Army will no doubt make progress; the figures of Greek guerrillas killed mount and are quoted with exultation in the Greek capital. But no one who understands thinks that this new offensive will be decisive. In Greece, as in China, the Americans support a crumbling ruin of the past. The black market rages; the rich, panic-stricken, are moving their money, and sometimes themselves, overseas; staff officers and the military command wield an absolute power. There is a pretence that the successful resistance of the guerrillas is due to the aid and comfort they receive from Slavs over the frontier. It is only a pretence; if Stalin wished to call this war off he could not do so. The war is a vendetta between a comparatively small number of fanatics on either side. Sooner or later they will tire of mutual extermination; perhaps some wise man will recall the lesson of the *Eumenides*. The majority has wanted neither the Fascists nor the Communists. They want what they wanted when the British first made their ill-starred intervention; they ask for the regenerated Greece promised after the war. Even now, if the foreigner withdrew, the will of the majority for peace would in time win its way. Unhappily, there is to-day no outstanding figure, but those who know Greece well tell me that, if a truce could be reached, there are adequate men who could form a government capable of making peace with the guerrillas and beginning the reconstruction of Greece. Such a truce, my informants say, might be possible in the summer, when on the one hand the guerrillas will be most hard-pressed, and on the other the Americans will have realised that the Greek Army cannot end resistance in the mountains. It may be the moment for Mr. Bevin if he still believes the things he used to say.

* * *

The horror and loathing that the murder of the brother of Captain Farran inspires in all of us must not prevent us from understanding its significance. The fact that Captain Farran has been acquitted by a British jury has no more effect on the minds of Jewish terrorists than the acquittal in Palestine of a Jewish terrorist would have on the minds of British officers there. The vendetta between the rival groups of commandos has been transferred from Palestine to England. The closest parallel is between Palestine to-day and post-war Ireland, in which the object of the I.R.A. was to kill Black-and-Tans and special police, who were equally ready to shoot at sight I.R.A. leaders. In such warfare, which is even more savage in Palestine than it ever was in Ireland, all scruples are forgotten. Strong-arm methods are used by both sides to extract information, and both sides rejoice when they add another victim to their bag of killed. As in Ireland and Greece, the only remedy is for us to leave the scene. Jews and Arabs may go on killing each other for some time, but the mass of the population has an overriding interest in reaching a settlement; sooner or later the tide will turn against the fanatics, and the two nationalities will learn to live together. As long as we remain, the necessity for peace is hidden by the presence of an unwanted third party.

* * *

That Indians should regret seeing the back of the last British Governor-General is an extraordinary fact which no one could have anticipated a year ago. Yet there is no doubt that many Indians will be sorry that Lord Mountbatten's period of office is over. He has already postponed his departure for three months at the request of the Indian Government, which, especially since the murder of the Mahatma, finds him an invaluable, impartial authority who stands above the party and personal rivalries. This, however, is not a position that can last, for, as constitutional Governor-General, Lord Mountbatten has no right to take part in politics, and if he does so he runs the risk of being gravely censured by the public when things go wrong. It has been known for some months that his successor would be C. Rajagopalachari, who, since the British left, has been Governor of Bengal. I was recently lucky enough to get to know Rajagopalachari in Calcutta. He is a conservative in politics and makes no claim to understand world events outside the sub-continent. But I should say that over a wide field he is the wisest and most level-headed person in India. He has a unique reputation, earned as Prime Minister of Madras, and as the man who in a most confused period of the war had the courage to take a clear line even when it meant opposing the majority of Congress and the Mahatma himself. As Governor-General, he will certainly use his influence for communal peace; he will always be against the extremists on both sides.

* * *

Rajagopalachari is a man of simple and unpretentious tastes; it is commonly thought that he will not wish to live in Government House in New Delhi, that vast mausoleum to British splendour in the East. But if future Governor-Generals do not live in Government House—I do not regard this as settled—the Indian Government has a curious little problem to solve. When Government House was designed by Sir Edward Lutyens, the object was to produce something so magnificent that even Maharajahs coming from their gorgeous palaces would be impressed. Externally it is impressive and its gardens are exquisite. Internally it is inconvenient. It contains (I've forgotten how many) miles of corridor. It stands on the top of a steep and commanding hill. When the British left India, it was at the Indian Government's request that Lord Mountbatten maintained this official residence instead, as he himself suggested, of moving into the modest but comfortable house which had been occupied by the British Commander-in-Chief. It is this house which, according to talk when I was in New Delhi, will now be the residence of Rajagopalachari. What then is to become of the monstrous white elephant on the top of the hill? Various schemes were mooted. Could it possibly be suitable as a vast Government guest house? Could it be a library and museum? But in that case, would it be used? How many Indians would toil up this unsheltered slope?

* * *

No better propaganda was ever done for the Labour Party than Mr. Churchill's forecast of a Labour Gestapo. Similarly, if Mr. Hudson had wanted to aid Communist propaganda, he could have thought of no more effective method than to tell the House of Commons that the new petrol regulations were the beginning of a Soviet police state as described by the Prime Minister. If punishing users of black market petrol is the equivalent of a police state, then in the minds of thousands of workers there can be nothing much wrong with Soviet methods. Partisan frivolity could scarcely go further. Mr. Attlee spoke seriously; he presumably accepts the picture of Russia drawn by Kravchenko and in the new book on *Forced Labour in Soviet Russia* by Dallin and Nicolevsky. This last book will shortly be discussed at some length in this journal. The commonly quoted figures of convict labour in the USSR are demonstrably exaggerated. But the fact of penal and forced labour on a very large scale in Russia is, I think, fairly well proved. No responsible person should so lend himself to the purposes of Communist propaganda as to suggest that there is a parallel between losing your liberty in Siberia and losing your driving licence if you use black market petrol.

* * *

Sir John Boyd Orr, retiring from the leadership of the F.A.O., has given us one more prophetic warning. The human race is "rumbling on to destruction. The nations of the world are insane: they are spending one-third of their national incomes preparing for the next war" instead of using their brains and resources to save themselves from a catastrophe which would be accelerated by war but which is really irrelevant to war. The population of the world is increasing at a prodigious rate; there are one million more people in the world than at the outbreak of the war. At the same time, as the F.A.O.'s publication, *Soil Erosion*, showed, the land which is the only possible basis for human life is everywhere decreasing. A map shows the increasing destruction by man's rapacity; desert has already swallowed up most of the Middle East, and the American dust bowl is only one example of a process at work in many parts of the world. One-third of the world now consists of soil of very low or no productivity. Civilisations in the past have disappeared in the swirling dust of their exhausted soils. A big harvest this year, as Sir John points out, does not alter the fact that the world food shortage is "only just beginning." But the Governments of the world, as he said, are "not interested. Their major problem is Communism *versus* private enterprise or the next election." It is because the solution of these fundamental problems is a human and not a national necessity that some of us here, and some in America, like Henry Wallace, hoped at the end of the war for collaboration between the big Powers. A standstill agreement, an "agreement to disagree," might still enable the leaders of the great Powers to return to sanity, and work together technically to save the human race instead of applying their brains to methods of turning vast new areas of the world into desert by radioactive bombs or sprays. There is no record that at any discussion since the war, Truman, Stalin or Bevin have even discussed food, population or soil erosion.

Critic

SET TO PARTNERS

On V-Day just three years ago, we cheered our brave Allies
Who helped to sweep the hated foe from earth and seas and skies,
We hung the banners out to greet *our* Gurkhas and *our* Sikhs,
Our Fighting French, *our* Czechs, *our* Poles, *our* Jugoslavs, *our* Greeks.

But Europe's skies are overcast since that victorious day,
Our Gurkhas and *our* Sikhs have passed from Britain's sovereign sway,
And yet another menace in his conscript ranks enrols
His Czechs, *his* Greeks, *his* Jugoslavs, *his* Prussians and *his* Poles.

Now democratic nations in another anxious pause
Are making preparations for another common cause,
Though peace is highly spoken of, the post-war world divides
And possible belligerents are busy changing sides.

So when our next V-Day is due, for those alive to see,
With fighting friends of World War Two opposed in World War Three,
Though old Allies have fallen out, new ranks will fill the gaps—
We'll maybe cheer *our* Germans, *our* Italians and *our* Japs.

Sagittarius

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed.

Paste entries on a postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

—— pleaded guilty to stealing one hundredweight of liquid milk chocolate . . . He wanted to be reconciled to his wife who got a separation order yesterday, so he thought he would get her some chocolate."—*Evening Standard.* (E. W. Amos.)

Mr. J. Porter (75), Tory canvasser, who died at Thurloxton (Somerset), once painted his mare blue. —*Sunday Express.* (J. Broadley.)

The Home Secretary has abolished the regulations, hitherto prevalent in certain Provincial Police Forces, prohibiting officers, except with prior consent of the Chief Constable, from marrying, playing cards, unbuttoning their tunics in canteens or consulting a solicitor.—*Law Society's Gazette.* (E. M. Cockburn.)

Judge Wethered granted a decree at Bristol Divorce Court to a man who, he said, found another man in his wife's bed, partly clothed, eating a hot lunch.—*Bristol Evening World.* (M. C. Jones.)

Advice on publicity was given by Mr.——— "If someone commits suicide and the name Exmouth appears in the daily press, or if we elect our beauty queen, the name of Exmouth is appearing before the public. That is the seed I want to plant." *Exmouth Chronicle.* (A. Wimbush.)

The boy who admitted stealing from his employer's shop and taking money from his home, said he had spent the money on political books. He wanted to become a full-time political organiser. *Evening Standard.* (C. A. F. G. Gardiner.)

WANTED—AN AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Three or four years ago agricultural policies were to be had for the asking. I have a pile of them in front of me as I write—a weird and wonderful collection. Here, for example, complete with two photographs of rural England and eleven comic cuts of jovial farmers and sinister officials, is *The Husbandman Waiteth*, five thousand words of the airiest of hot air, issued by the Tory Reform Committee. And here (an almost lunatic production) is *A Scientific Policy for British Agriculture*, a pamphlet sponsored by an unofficial group of members of both Houses of Parliament *plus* some scientists, who call themselves the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee. The prodigies of asininity that an agricultural policy-maker can achieve have to be read to be believed. I need not describe the other items in my collection; there are over twenty of them, and they range from the slimmest of leaflets to substantial volumes. In this orgy of policy-making, which was primarily directed towards the approaching General Election, the Left was conspicuous by its absence. The Labour Party published a dreary twopenn'orth called *The Land*, and the Communists produced a couple of creditable but unrealistic pamphlets. But with these exceptions, to which two books—one a Fabian symposium, the other the record of an investigation organized by Lord Astor and Mr. Seebohm Rowntree—should perhaps be added, the Right or Right Centre did all the talking.

This is not surprising. Throughout its history the Labour Party has only taken an occasional, spasmodic interest in farmers and farming. Its panacea of land-nationalisation, now apparently in cold storage, was a tenurial rather than an agricultural reform; it would have ended the landlord-and-tenant system, but would have had little direct effect on what farmers produce or how they produce it. Sir Daniel Hall, who was probably the ablest agriculturist of our time and a keen advocate of land-nationalisation, while conceding "many points of value" in the Labour Party's pre-war programme, finally dismissed it in his *Reconstruction and the Land* (1941) as "not sufficiently appreciative of the technical points at issue, of the land and of farming itself as distinct from their social repercussions." The criticism is not unfair. The Party's leaders, like the Party itself, have always been more concerned over such sentimental issues as the tied cottage than with the agricultural essentials, like output per man-hour.

In the circumstances it was natural that the Labour Party went into the 1945 Election without an agricultural policy of its own. Lacking a genuinely Socialist policy, it took over, as the best alternative that was then available, the wartime system of guaranteed prices and cropping control by county committees, originally evolved in the 1914-18 war, and introduced by the Chamberlain Government in September 1939. It *was* semi-Socialist, and it had certainly worked during the war. But the system, which has now been perpetuated by the Agriculture Act of 1947, suffers from an inherent contradication, which has become increasingly evident since the end of the war. The basic incentives remain capitalist—prices, guaranteed for several years in advance, that would have made the old-style farmer's mouth water. The main deterrents, on the other hand, the fear of cropping orders and possible eviction, might be called Socialist. This compromise, as might have been expected, is giving us the worst of both worlds. It is apparent now that neither incentives nor deterrents are tending to maximise production. With a comfortable living to be had almost for the asking on the more fertile soils, many farmers, quite naturally, are taking things rather easily. Yet only a small minority of incompetents, the "C" farmers, are coming under the supervision of the County Agricultural Executive Committees.

Professor A. W. Ashby, our leading agricultural economist, has recently demonstrated statistically how serious the situation is. With the mechanisation of farming since 1939 one would have imagined that the average agriculturist would be getting a great deal more done now than before the war. In fact, the performance per man per year is 2 per cent less to-day than it was in 1937-39. The discrepancy is partly due to the shorter working week and the longer holidays, but even the performance per man-hour is only 3 per cent higher than in 1937-39. These are really staggering figures. Tractors have gone up from 55,000 in 1939 to 235,000 in 1947; combine harvesters and milking machines have multiplied by several thousand per cent; and yet the average English farmer and farmworker are actually getting less done in the year! The admission would be shocking enough, even if cheap imported food were round the next corner; but with the desperate need for increased food-production to-day it is a national scandal.

The Labour Party has got to do some real thinking about agriculture. And the first question that it must ask itself is: "What is the ultimate Socialist objective for British agriculture?" My criticism of Mr. Tom Williams, the present Minister, is that he has not known, except in a vague sort of way, where he was going. Partly through circumstances beyond his own control, he has lived from hand to mouth, achieving only a patchwork of improvisations. But short-term policy, such as the present four-year targets, is meaningless unless related to a long-term objective, which in its turn must inevitably be conditioned by technical and economic trends. The analysis must begin, I believe, with the economic problem. What exactly is the *function* of the food-producer in the modern State?

There have been three farming systems in Western European history. In the first or subsistence stage each family's aim is simply to feed and clothe itself for the ensuing year; our open-fields system was subsistence farming in co-operative parish units. In the second or primitive capitalist stage the individual farmer exchanges his surplus produce for the "luxuries" of the towns, and the unit is the nation-state, which provides within its boundaries conditions of more or less perfect competition. The third or international stage is reached when the population of a country outgrows its food-producing capacity; this stage, in which we have been for the last hundred years or so, has not yet developed its appropriate farming system. Its most characteristic feature, however, comparable to the progress of enclosure in the second stage, has been the increasing intervention of the State. Unpredictable movements of prices in the world-market have compelled individual primary producers, the survivors from the second stage, to hide behind tariffs, quotas, subsidies and export-bounties. Throughout the world each country is becomin more and more its own exporter and importer o food.

Can the process stop there? Is it not clear tha for our modern farming system to acquire it complete formulation, as the capitalist system di in the landlord-and-tenant four-course farmin of the mid-nineteenth century, the State must no only place the orders and make the purchases, a at present, but also do the actual farming? Th reason why anything short of nationalised farmin can only be a provisional phase, like the growin of clover and turnips in the open fields, is th uncertainty in the foreseeable future (i) of th kinds and quantities of food that will be availab on the international market, and (ii) of our ow terms of trade. What we shall require, in a probability, is a flexible agriculture that can b contracted or expanded as required. But as lon as farming remains in private hands it is bound be inelastic to the point of rigidity—difficult expand except under the threat of invasion starvation, and—with the political influence commands—almost impossible to contract.

Ultimately the farming of this country is goi to be in the hands of the State. Political dynami though the proposition may be, if there is to party competition for the farming vote, it is presumption that must underlie all realist agricultural planning. The economic prob bilities are reinforced by the technical advantag Instead of farmers and farmworkers we mu surely expect a network of salaried scientists, wi qualifying examinations, a ladder of promotio retiring ages, a scale of pensions and all the par phernalia of bureaucracy. Nor is there anythi in such a prospect that should shock a member the Labour Party, who is in touch with ru realities. Nationalised farming was envisage and welcomed, in *The Land and the Nation Planning of Agriculture* (1932), which remain until recently the official statement of the Party agricultural policy, though it is recognised the that "for the time being" most of the actu farming would remain in the hands of individu farmers. The] Socialist contribution will be create a democratic framework for the new syste Hitherto the interventions of the State have be remote and authoritarian, an Order to be compli with, a Return to be filled in. These foretas of the managerial revolution derive in fact fr Conservative Ministers of Agriculture; Socialists we must transform control from ab into co-operative participation at all levels in process of planned production.

The long-term Socialist objective, then, can summarised, I suggest, as nationalised farmi organised democratically—an economic necess married to a political ideal. The short-te implications remain to be considered.

F. W. Bateson

(*To be concluded.*)

SOUTH AFRICA'S ELECTIO

The decision to hold the Union's electio earlier than expected—on May 26 has had results. First, the Budget has been postpo until the new Assembly meets. It was genera expected to be a "popular" one—i.e. it wo reduce, *inter alia*, the present "torturing" in the £ income-tax rate. It is now known the Union has a considerable adverse tr balance, and the Budget might make unpleas hearing. The timing of the election and postponement of the Budget are characteristi the ostrich complex in Union politics, and Smuts' political acumen—he's not ca *slim Jannie* (astute Jan) for nothing. The sa acumen underlies his recent switch of dep premier Jan Hofmeyr from Finance to a second portfolio, for Rand business men don't like and his championship of the African e unnerves many of his own supporters. And suspects the mind of Smuts behind Mr. A. Alexander's recent statement that a section of Home Fleet will visit the Cape—a nicely ti reminder for the republicans that Britannia still floats despite her unbuoyant economy.

The second and more important aspect of the pre-election scene is the emergence of the "native question" as the dominant issue. At the moment Smuts' United Party has an overall majority of 25 in a House of 153. Dr. Malan's Nationalists comprise the chief opposition party. Other groups in the House are Labour, Independents, and the remnants of the South African Party. (The three representatives of the Bantu are not concerned in the election, having their own election at a different time.) Outside Parliament are at least six organisations which will also nominate candidates or otherwise play a part on polling day. Prominent among these are the Afrikaner Party, which the late General Hertzog formed after falling out with Smuts and then with Malan; and a new party, the Central Party, formed by the ex-Labour M.P., the Rev. Miles Cadman. Others are the New Order (Fascist) group of Dr. Oswald Pirow, pre-war Minister of Defence, who's lately been exchanging compliments with Oswald Mosley, and more of the same ilk, as tedious to describe as they are in action.

This multiplicity of groups has of recent months resolved into two clearly defined camps and, by electoral pacts, ensured that there will be a straight contest for almost every seat. One camp, led by Malan, wants an even more rigid colour bar and an even clearer recognition of the Whites as the *Herrenvolk*; the other, led by Smuts, wants to continue the present policy of slowly—oh, so slowly—modifying the colour bar and gradually—oh, so gradually—elevating the Bantu.

Racially speaking, the choice before the electorate is between slightly Right-of-Centre and far Right-of-Right; but at that point the ideological tags common to European politics exhaust their usefulness: the election set-up makes nonsense of "Right" or "Left." The Union nationalised aviation, railways, steel, the marketing of farm products and the bankers' bank long before Britain made a start on any of these things; but the Government Party—the United Party—is passionately wedded to private enterprise and commands the support of Big Business, though it will have an electoral agreement with Labour, and may receive the small Communist Party's vote. Conversely, you will find many sound Socialist principles (for the Whites) in the Nationalist programme, and perhaps this has been an added bait (added, that is, to their attitude to the native question) for a splintering-off of Labour from the main body, and for Cadman's Central Party. The Nationalists' strangest bed-fellows will be the South African Party which, as the Dominion Party, came into being precisely to oppose their new mates' republican aspirations and to push their own King and Empire ideals. All of which goes to show that at any rate the three million Whites are at last facing up to the fact that their country's destiny is inextricably wrapped up with the welfare of their eight million Asiatic and coloured countrymen.

Progressives may also derive a grain of comfort from the virtual disappearance of the Boer *v.* Briton antagonism which has been in the forefront of South African politics for the thirty-eight years since Union. At all events, the presence for the first time of many English-speaking South Africans in his ranks has persuaded Malan to keep quiet about secession from the Commonwealth, republicanism, and Smuts' machiavellian policy of packing the country with United Kingdom emigrants.

All reliable commentators agree that Smuts should be returned to power, but prophecy is rash when some last-minute event might swing over the small number of voters who could well put Malan in the saddle. What will happen then to the Union's Commonwealth relations, her Pan-African co-operation, and, above all, to her own non-White peoples, is anybody's guess. What is certain is a speedy quashing of the Indian Representation Act (which doesn't please the Indians either, but for a somewhat different reason), the present Government's schemes for increasing Bantu representation, and the vital Bill which Smuts is introducing to recognise Africans' trade unions.

CHARLES BOKKIE

LIVING IN JERUSALEM

MY friend Margaret was seriously thinking of taking her children away from the school they went to and sending them somewhere else. The school stood neatly between two rival outposts on the outskirts of Jerusalem, and when one outpost fired at another the bullets whizzed across the playground, and children and teachers scuttled bent double to get across. She changed her mind about it when some people who lived on the south of her own garden began to shoot at some other people who lived on the western side of it. She said it didn't seem worth while bothering, especially as they would be leaving Palestine so soon. (She is the wife of a British Government official). The children, like all children living in Palestine, added considerably to their collections of spent ammunition with English, Arabic and Hebrew factory numbers on it. They kept on going to school until they left, of course.

Most children do. There is very little else for the young to do during a civil war, and the fact that most of the schools keep open does more than anything to provide a sane basis to the lunacy of the rest of existence. Living bang in the middle of the modern Jewish town—it is not a very wide town and you can shoot right across it if you put your mind to it, which quite a few people seem to—I had brought up my own three infants with the definite intention of sending them all to the same school. Naturally it didn't work out that way. The eldest was too old for kindergarten by the time the other two started going. Then the second one turned out to be maladjusted, which meant breaking windows, and had to go to the kind of kindergarten where they treat that sort of thing as an expression of personality. It was a very difficult kindergarten to get into, and the third child, they said rather disgustedly, was far too normal for it. So by the time *de facto* Partition really got into its stride I had three children under the age of seven scattered in three different educational establishments in the Jewish part of Jerusalem, all within a quarter of an hour's walk of home. It was considerably less, I found, when there was shooting going on. The system worked out more expensive, but was a comfort by that time; at least one hadn't all one's eggs in one basket. True, when there was a particularly loud explosion one did not really know which child to run to first, but that simply meant that after a while one ran to none, but waited, telling oneself that no news was good news, until the children came home—under their own power, alone or escorted by a teacher.

If this does nothing else for children it teaches them a certain amount of common sense. At six years old my eldest son—left with his small brother and sister and a "sitting" art student in a small flat during one of those afternoons when for no particular reason everyone within earshot suddenly starts shooting—shepherded the art student and the rest of the family into the central corridor, to be out of the line of fire. When we returned he was tearful, but had the presence of mind to say that what his nerves really needed was a little cognac in his tea, so that one doubted if the shock had gone too deep.

It is possible, of course, that an existence spent chiefly in wishing that you were old enough for the Haganah is not good for any child, although in times of war it is difficult to know what one can do. Perhaps encourage the young to play a nice game of United Nations, sit down for a pleasant round-table conference with the Moderate Arabs? No, it is far more enjoyable to spend one's leisure hours alternately demanding the identity cards of all comers, and, with ear-splitting accuracy, imitating the sounds of various kinds of weapons of assault. The Moslem lady who, according to a Palestinian Arab paper, recently named her twin offspring Bren and Sten, was only following a trend which has become increasingly noticeable in Palestine, although among the Jews it is possibly more confined to the younger set. It was at least a week after his arrival in the peace of Kensington that my son stopped building road blocks at the entrance to every room and converting music stands into Sten guns.

We travelled, en route for London, down from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv in a Haganah convoy which got little publicity because no one shot at it. Apart from the general matiness inseparable from wartime—the driver was full of bright conversation, possibly as a reaction from driving a heavy armour-plated bus twice a day up and down a mountain road usually raked by every kind of fire—and the occasional hold-ups during which we removed the younger children from the bus and sat them on pots on the safe side of the armour plating—you would not have known there was a war on. During one of these pauses we heard a couple of shots, which turned out to have been only the guards showing one of the children how it worked. The advantages of this apparent waste of ammunition emerged later, when at sunset we lurched through a sandbagged emplacement ringed with battle-dressed Haganah silhouetted against a bright spring sky, into Tel Aviv. As we came through the sandbags about a hundred small children dashed up screaming in Hebrew: "Bullets, Mister—give us your bullets." The guards handed over the spent ammunition they had; it wasn't a very good bag, but it was obviously better than cigarette cards.

The drawback, of course, of living in this kind of melodrama is that to the adult it is either too real or it is not real at all. The ordinary housewife in Jerusalem can tell herself, if she is of an imaginative turn of mind, that when she slings her string bag over her arm to go out and get something for lunch she's just as likely to end up dead as not. But she doesn't really believe it, any more than the British housewife believed a few years ago that a flying bomb was going to light on her personally, or believes to-day that she is going to be run over by a bus in the High Street. The thing is real only when it happens to oneself or to one's personal friends—and in the latter case it stays real only for a frighteningly short time. True, there is a quick glance round the café or the cinema or the concert hall to see where possible machine gun or other fire might come from. But it is a cursory glance, no more serious than the glance one gave cafés in the past to see if the C.I.D. couple in brown suede shoes and checked sports jackets were really listening to what one was saying. And one is rather ashamed of taking precautions—business, everyone is busy telling himself, is as usual; we can take it. And, of course like any other people rather to our own surprise, we can.

Children take melodrama far more casually. To them it seems so little out of the ordinary. Scared they may be, when something is actually happening, but it passes off. A month or so after the trouble started my son, in that odd literal translation of Hebrew idiom into the vernacular of the parents which all bilingual Palestinian children speak, said:

"Mummy, I did dream that two Arabs did come to me as I came from school, and with knives they did try to kill me."

Three or four months ago this would have meant a stern lecture on generalisations, good Arabs and bad Arabs, and so on, but it's too late now. I said:

"What did you do?"

"I did take my pocket knife and I did kill both. Mummy, if it was real, would you smack me?"

There, if one comes down to it, is an appreciation of the realities of existence.

DIANA GILLON

THE OLD LOOK

"I'M so glad you asked me," said Roan Filly, giving a pat to her mane and glancing at the reflection of her spring frock in the glass door as we passed into Burlington House. "I don't know much about Art, but I do like a nice green landscape. I like to see grass so well painted that you simply feel you could eat it."

I bought her a catalogue and began looking about.

"I know that the future," she was saying, "with its infinite possibilities of variation, can only continue to rise gradually on the solid foundation of the past."

"I don't see time like that, Roan dear; but aren't you being a shade platitudinous?"

"It's not my *mot*," she said. "It's Sickert's. It's in the catalogue, as a sort of motto."

She was turning over the pages with a beautifully pedicured hoof.

"No. 212!" she cried. "That's the picture for me. Let's make a bee-line for it."

"To make a bee-line one would have to ride rough-shod over the crowd."

"Rough-shod! How very unkind of you, when I was feeling so very pleased with my new shoes."

She handed me the catalogue. "Horse Conversation-piece, 1940," I read. "Mr. J. V. Rank's three Horses, Southern Hero, Black Speck and Knight's Armour—Sir Alfred J. Munnings, P.R.A."

As we turned into Gallery Three she gave a whinny of pleasure, and "Yoo-hoo!" a wolfish voice replied: it seemed to come from Southern Hero. My companion tossed her head.

"Gee, what curves!" said Southern Hero.

"It says 1940," Roan muttered. "I rather dislike coltishness in the middle-aged. They're well-groomed, of course, but a bit slick for my taste."

"Well, sister," said Southern Hero, "they call this a private view. It's about as private as the paddock at Aintree before the big race."

"I've been doing a spot of mass observation," said Black Speck. "It's enough to make a horse laugh. This morning I counted one bath-chair, one spinal carriage, eleven pairs of crutches, twenty-four sticks with rubber suckers on the end, two glass eyes, an ear-trumpet, and an exophthalmic goitre."

"You seem to get a kick out of other people's troubles," said Roan Filly.

"Oh, canter off!" said Black Speck rudely.

"Don't mind him," said Southern Hero. "He's feeling his oats. Talking of spring, did you ever see such flowery hats? One could almost eat them. I keep thinking of that story of Saki's about the ox that browsed on the chrysanthemums. You remember that the resulting picture, 'Ox in a Morning-Room, Late Autumn,' was the turning-point in Eshley's career."

"There's a picture this year," I remarked, "called 'Giraffes Resting at Noonday.'"

"Not only giraffes," said Knight's Armour. "There hasn't been a vacant place on the settees all day. At hat-level it looks like the Chelsea Flower-Show, but beneath the brims Abdication is writ large."

"I know this is only a survival of what was once a social occasion," said Black Speck, "but what a lot of messy dressers!"

"It's all very well," snapped Roan Filly, "to pick on these old dears and their weak points. They may be short of coupons. And don't forget about yourselves, boys. What are *you?* Just a bunch of nudes!"

"Now, no horse-play!" I put in. "After all, though this is called an academy, it's one of the last refuges of *laissez-faire*. One can't be surprised that the dowdy or garish eclecticism on the walls is reflected in the clothes of the spectators."

Just then I overheard somebody saying, "Russell Flint—that wonderful wash—it must be a *knack*."

At this Roan Filly shied, and a tremor went through the others. Her nostrils were dilated and she was showing the whites of her eyes. I asked her what was the matter. "I thought she said *knacker*," Roan whispered hoarsely.

"Don't be so touchy," I said. "If you horses will excuse me, I think I'll have a trot round and look at the pictures."

Ah, where were the Arnesby-Browns and the Tukes of my childhood, those corner-stones in "the solid foundation of the past"? And few, nowadays, were the peeps at Portofino, the glimpses of Split. But it was still "Low Tide at Mousehole" or "Daffodil Time at Lamorna," and the conventionally picturesque had again been pursued beyond the "Flower Study" and the "View from my Window, Leatherhead," to the quaint purlieus of Willimoteswick, of Ruanlanihorne and Letheringsett. How reassuring, these painters, how innocent—and how they proliferate!

"But aren't you *ever* in London?"

"No, I'm *wedded* to Budleigh."

"What slushy snow, and it seems to be infested with mice."

"No, dear, they're birds, or dead leaves."

"A problem picture."

"So soft in colour—it's very lovely."

"Here's a very fine Munnings."

"I must mark it for Granny."

"That *can't* be a Frinton-Mole!"

"Oh, but it is. He prefers to paint with his feet, you know."

I trudged past the painted ladies, whose personal points might once have graced the covers of chocolate boxes. I tramped past the hard, glossy likenesses of successful public men—a form of capital punishment unlikely to be abolished just yet. When I was looking at No. 3911 ("Dull Afternoon, Bognor Regis"), a voice behind me said "Are you an exhibitor?"

"Oh, yes," I said. "But I shan't tell you of what. Are you?"

"Yes. *That's* mine, I'm a press advertising agent, and this is more or less my hobby."

"How nice. It's Winston Churchill's, too."

"It was just coming on to rain," he confided, drawing my wandering attention to his picture, "and I knocked that off in almost no time."

Somehow innocence can be very oppressive. And somehow fatigue promotes injustice. If only somebody had been able to concentrate the better pictures—of which there are more than might be supposed—in one gallery. How pleasing, for example, the setting in which Mr. Le Bas has placed "The Collector," and surely the features of the collector himself are those of an eminent contributor to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION. . . .

I thought it time to return to my companion, and I began to struggle through the phalanxes of daughters of the manse, golfing widows, dwarf bearded matrons, decrepit academicians, waterfront Bohemians from Strand-on-the-Green, rural deans, art-loving bank managers, and nice young persons behind the times. I edged and burrowed and buffeted my way past "infinite possibilities of variation"; past pictures modest, dim or tame; past many pictures on which a dreadful soulless skill had been lavished; and most often past pictures too loud and too fussy. There came into my mind a saying that J. B. Yeats quoted from an unknown source and apropos, I think, of Orpen—that *Vulgarity is the excess of the means of expression over the content*. . .

When I got back to Gallery Three, Roan Filly seemed to have vanished. I hurried over to the horses to ask which way she had gone. I saw at once what had happened: she had discarded her clothes and joined the horses in their field of oily canvas. When she saw me she nodded and gave a friendly neigh.

"I hope you don't mind," she said, "but the boys asked me in for some specialised horse-conversation, and I think I'll stay here for a bit. (Between ourselves, I've rather fallen for Southern Hero.) It's true I don't figure in the catalogue, but I don't suppose anybody'll notice that there are now four of us. After all, what does one horse, more or less, matter among friends?"

WILLIAM PLOMER

The Arts and Entertainment

SOMETHING NEW

A BLAZE of obscurity has surrounded the opening, at the Aldwych Theatre, of Gian-Carlo Menotti's two chamber operas, *The Medium* and *The Telephone*. There was a general unawareness that Mr. Menotti is not exactly nobody, but an Italian-American composer in his thirties who has had two short operas staged at the Metropolitan (one of them, *Amelia Goes to the Ball*, with considerable success), and who has achieved a Broadway run of a year or so with the double bill now offered. There is a decided danger that, for want of intelligent guidance, the English public won't discover in time that Mr. Menotti's entertainment, without amounting to anything very much in the way of Art, is nevertheless first-rate theatre, original and stimulating both to eye and ear.

Without spoken dialogue, and with an orchestra of fourteen, these two chamber operas are in no other respect comparable with *Lucretia* or *Albert Herring*. The musical invention is altogether slighter; never pretentious, and never exactly dull, the scores might almost be called first-class radio music—but with the important rider that Mr. Menotti has an inborn understanding of how to write effectively for voices, and a strong theatrical sense which animates his own clear, zestful and decisive texts. We start with *The Telephone*, an expanded revue sketch about a young man whose attempts at a proposal are constantly foiled by the addiction of his girl to that maddening instrument. The score is akin to Wolf-Ferrari's *Segreto di Susanna*, and shows a nice wit in the invention of long-winded and many-sectioned arias (complete with exasperatingly suitable recapitulations) for the reclining heroine to sing into her mouthpiece. And Maria d'Attili really does sing, with a flexible, well-trained voice and a deliciously musical sense of fun.

The Medium is a piece of unashamed, sure-fire Grand Guignol, hovering now and again on the borderline of art. There is real ironic point in the conception of a fraudulent medium who begins herself to suffer from hallucinations, and whose clients will not believe her protestations of guilt. As this blowsy, fat, red-wigged, square-headed Irish virago, Marie Powers gives a striking performance; in the fake *séances*, which take place in a memorably sinister, rusty-black parlour, she is assisted by her daughter Monica (Evelyn Keller) and a mute half-caste waif named Toby (Leo Coleman): a most touching and graceful performance, this, from an accomplished ballet-dancer. The best music in the score is the strange one-voiced "love-duet" between these two at the beginning of the second act. One way and another, it adds up to an unusual and highly enjoyable evening. But if you want to go, go quickly.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

THE THEATRE

"Royal Circle," at Wyndham's

"Frenzy," at St. Martin's

"Happy with Either," at St. James'

Sir Ralph Richardson, in a breezy performance vainly tries to carry *Royal Circle* on his own shoulders This play about a Ruritanian King, whose smal country is suddenly threatened with importance, neve comes together as a whole, contains too many reall bad jokes and a streak of vulgarity in its treatment o back-stage monarchical life. Sir Ralph succeeds i creating his character, but I am not sure that it is no at the expense of the play. No doubt he knew that hi was the only way, but if he did know that, why o earth . . . ? the theatre is full of such mysteries.

In *Frenzy* Mr. Peter Ustinov also shoulders the sol burden in his own adaptation of the Swedish film Carelessly put together and indifferently acted, excep for Miss Joan Greenwood as a slut, *Frenzy* to obviously says to us: "I am a vehicle." But vehicle for what? Mr. Ustinov has a marked talen for mimicry: and mimicry is only a part of acting— the part which may be highly entertaining at privat parties unless, fatally, it goes on too long. His sadisti school-master is a clever turn extended through a long evening. Mr. Ustinov is both young enough and lucky enough to be able to continue experimenting in any and every direction. He hasn't yet found a channel for his erratic gifts: but perhaps it is a sign of grace that he hasn't—that he hasn't settled before he is thirty into some slick line of success.

It is a great pity that *Happy with Either* does not make the impact it might, for it is a comedy of great charm. Unfortunately the actor, who would give it its final rap, is not there. Mr. Wilfred Hyde Whyte has a vein of pleasant fooling which he works excellently within his physical limits; but nature hasn't granted him (and nothing else can supply) the personal magnetism to convince us that he could have so captivated the two women he has married and a third he does not quite go off with. Miss Valerie Taylor and Miss Angela Baddeley are beautifully right as his two wives sharing a Shropshire farm to which, after his spell "inside" for bigamy the affable scapegrace hopefully returns. Miss Baddeley transforms herself into the mother of two daughters, who is thickening into middle age, with an irrepressible spring of laughter which he knows just how to touch off. Miss Valerie Taylor can lift herself at a stroke from the aching feet of an afternoon's shopping to the romantic response. A gently amusing evening which with the least luck might have been very much more.

T. C. Worsley

RADIO NOTES

"Nation shall speak peace unto nation": it was the dream of the pioneers of broadcasting and remains the motto of the B.B.C. It must be admitted that the wavelengths that transmit the voice of peace are not easy to find; interference is considerable, and amid the howling of the static the voice fades. But at any rate the B.B.C. does something to enable us to understand other peoples' problems and ways of life. It is probably most successful in enlightening us about the United States, partly because its effort is unremitting, and partly because there is no language difficulty. Regularly those high-speed, leather-lunged, imperturbable commentators, Mr. Joseph Harsch and Mr. Clifton Utley, leave us breathless with admiration as they unwind for us the clue of the labyrinth of American politics; while the persuasive Mr. Alastair Cooke expounds for us the mysteries of the American way of life. From other countries we have political talks, it is true, but accounts of life as it is lived by the masses are less common. Last week's *Focus on France* was, therefore, the more welcome. The *Focus* programmes have an honourable history as documentaries but, as compared with last year, when they were one of the most exciting series in radio journalism, the level of script-writing in recent months has been very uneven. *Focus on France* was quite up to the old standard. The work of Miss Marjorie Banks and Mr. Edward Ward, it was based on recordings made in France within the last few weeks and gave an admirably balanced survey of French life and problems to-day. The editors were fortunate in discovering French men and women—housewives, technicians, civil servants, journalists—who could broadcast lucidly and fluently in English, and the danger that might have arisen from this, that France would be presented mainly in terms of its bourgeoisie, was successfully averted; the grievances of the Marseilles dockers, for instance, appeared to have lost nothing in Mr. Ward's narration.

But the most ambitious attempt up to the present to familiarise us with other ways of life is the Sunday evening feature series *India and Pakistan*, which has now been in progress for three weeks. The first programme, *The Road to India*, which was purely historical, strikes one as having been the most difficult assignment; Mr. Francis Watson used a somewhat old-fashioned technique but packed his script with information. Mr. Francis Dillon's *Indian Village* was fascinating, but suffered, it seemed to me, from the producer's carelessness in editing the recordings on which it was based. The final effect was ragged; but the evocation of the Indian village itself through recordings of the villagers' work songs, the translations of which were made and delivered with the utmost tact, was both poignant and exciting. But the most successful programme thus far in the series is Mr. MacNeice's *Portrait of Delhi*. No one can make radio-writing look easier than Mr. MacNeice; he knows "all the tricks of the virtuosos who invert the usual." What other writer would dare to begin his programme by mocking precisely the kind of feature he is writing? What other writer would have the nerve to build his programme on five narrators and call them "Ignorance," "Topography," "History," "Literature" and "The Birds"? His method is to say lightheartedly "Let's pretend"; and, before we know where we are, we have taken up the challenge and are pretending with him to such effect that without our realising it the pretences have become conventions. Much of the charm of his programmes comes from this air of improvisation, of improvisation in which the listener himself takes part. *Portrait of Delhi* was gay; it danced along; it did perfectly what it set out to do, to give an impression of Delhi over all the centuries of its existence. And it did more than this, as was shown when Mr. MacNeice came to the communal troubles following partition and the assassination of Gandhi. His rendering of these was a most moving piece of radio-writing.

William Salter

THE MOVIES

"Hamlet," at the Odeon

Olivier's *Hamlet* must, of course, and will, be seen. It has many incidental merits. The screen has the capability, used sometimes here to magnificent effect, of bringing close to us one character after another. A casual moment provides our first sight of Hamlet and Ophelia together; he sits musing in the dark empty hall while, two hundred feet away, she appears in a door-way to the garden, glances, and passes on. The distance is felt as well as seen: a feeling we shan't forget.

Within the complex, loose-ended action of *Hamlet* one drama, that of Ophelia, comes out with a clarity I have never known from the stage or, for that matter, the text. This Ophelia (Miss Jean Simmons) is young—not more than seventeen; she listens gravely to her brother's parting words on chastity, with a demure glee enjoining him not to forget his own advice; and then behind his back plays and fiddles when *his* turn has come to listen, with Polonius in full sail. While that by no means idiotic but boring old gentleman measures out his apothegms, we "catch on" to Ophelia rather more than the text allows. The encounters with Hamlet, an earlier memory visually reclaimed, the occasion of her being let loose to him, and the play-scene when he insultingly gets his revenge, follow more or less the prescribed course. Then she has to go mad, and this on the screen, with a few premonitory scares and distractions, she convincingly does. We don't, as in the theatre, ignore or lose sight of her for too long, and she doesn't too abruptly appear mad and singing.

A progress along a corridor, a close-up, round frightened eyes, the flowers in her hair: the chain of events is swiftly accomplished. Miss Simmons's mad scenes (she acts them very simply; her beauty does the rest) are the most affecting I have known: in fact this is the first time, in my experience, that the shock of Ophelia gone mad has moved and not embarrassed. The King and Queen appear genuinely grieved. She drifts along a terrace, and Horatio pauses in talk with two messengers to let her pass. The suicide, with its incomparable pastoral elegy, concludes the most moving passage in the film. Only two pieces of vulgarity have marred this story of Ophelia: one when the speech "O what a noble mind is here o'erthrown" is cut so that she may sob her heart out instead on a flight of steps, and the other when, still humming to herself, she glides on her back downstream. In similar, though not as striking ways, Polonius (Felix Aylmer) and Claudius and Gertrude (Basil Sydney and Eileen Herlie) acquire new moments of intimacy through the camera's ability to isolate

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individual figures and to give us a refracted impression of the set scene.

But Hamlet, you will exclaim, what about Hamlet? Well there, nearly all the time, is Olivier with commanding voice and presence. He cannot but steal the screen, and yet he disappoints. He isn't Hamlet, but Henry V with a foul wind or Ulysses tent-bound. Rarely does he thrill; his soliloquies come from set features (often whispered in thought instead of spoken); his movements are slow, his changes of mood monotonous as a repeatedly spun coin. This, in fact, is a negatively strong Hamlet, and so weaker than the most febrile, because in the end we simply cannot understand why and how such a man can fail in action.

The whole piece is slowed down to a pensive prowling in the council chamber and on the battlements. The weather outside is for nine-tenths of the time Gothic mist, and indoors a huge empty hall with four central pillars provides the setting and lighting for every kind of scene. It is as though the hero of *Crime and Punishment* were to take up residence in a railway terminus. I don't say that this kind of enlarged utility stage, which conveys no sense of anyone living there, is a mistake, but it is a mistake that this thought should be allowed to creep out as often as it does. The camera also prowls about, looking at walls and up steps, even more conscientiously, more unhurryingly than Hamlet himself. Beauty of background and photography cannot make up for the lack of speed. And in order to render that slowing-down possible the text has had to be cut drastically.

The politics of the play have gone; the soliloquies are chopped and clipped, muted, melo-dramatized; the players are instructed at length how to speak, and never utter a line; only the dumb-show remains, and this takes away all the preparation for Hamlet's theatrical flourish over Ophelia's grave. In a published record (*The Film Hamlet*, Saturn Press, 7*s*. 6*d*.), which is rather more than the usual commemoration volume, Olivier describes his production as an "Essay in *Hamlet*" rather than *Hamlet* itself. He has, as he points out, packed a four-and-half hours' play into a two-and-a-half hours' film. But how loosely packed! And at what a cost to Shakespeare's shuttle of action and our enjoyment! He would have preferred (he tells us), if an actor of sufficient stature could have been found, not to play the part of Hamlet himself, Hotspur and Henry V being more to his style. For wearing a blond wig he gives the quite silly reason that it would carry more of Hamlet and less of Olivier. It doesn't, of course. After Olivier the chief agent in this production was the camera.

Macbeth, with its mixture of tragedy and melodrama, I still consider by far the most filmable of Shakespeare's plays.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Correspondence

THE KEY TO THE "ICE-BOX"

SIR,—Ritchie Calder has arrived at a valid conclusion, which I enthusiastically support, by invalid argument. Who were "the button manufacturers" of 1879? Whose invention did they block, and what evidence is there of the blockage? Was it not mechanically impossible to make the zip-fastener of commerce at that time? Was not the real date of invention about 1904, and was it not even then ahead of its time because it could not be mass-produced? Is not this instance of "blocking" typical of the many imaginary cases which are constantly alleged but never substantiated?

The fact is that no patented invention for which there is a real substantial demand can be suppressed in the U.K., because it is subject to Patent Law, which provides appropriate remedy. Mr. Calder's allegations, so commonly made, have been refuted over and over again by every sort of skilled independent finding.

There is a complaint about employee inventors. If a man is employed and paid *inter alia* to invent, what kind of complaint is it, that he should not be paid twice? Further, the value-contribution of the *inventor*, in respect of most modern inventions, is relatively small. The value of the capital and other investment in developing the invention to the commercial stage is of vastly greater account. This is a matter of complex industrial economics, but can be more readily appreciated when the accidental nature of invention, and its frequent coincidence with parallel invention by others, is related to the deliberate nature of the essential reduction to practice.

In U.K. Patent Law, the "blocking patent" is almost—admittedly not quite—a rhetorical suggestion, and not a practical fact.

What is suggested by Mr. Calder about the Steenbock discovery? Is it suggested that its profits should not have been realised and ploughed back into humanitarian research? Why should a royalty not be levied on medicaments, if the income is used to find better ones? I put it to Mr. Calder, that the "M. & B." products, which have probably saved more lives than any war has ended, would never have been available, had it not been for profits on medical proprietary goods.

Fundamentally Mr. Calder confuses two issues. He has failed to distinguish between the abuse of monopoly (I do not deny that this exists) and the lethargy of commerce in respect of invention adoption. The former is dangerous and rare; the latter is negatively vicious, and common. It is, to som extent, against the latter complaint that the Nationa Research Development Corporation should be prophylactic.

There is a valid defence in some cases, whic should be considered objectively, to that *apparen* industrial inertia which is often compared wit "refrigeration." If an industry—such as the automobile industry—is highly organised, it is practicall difficult to innovate. If a manufacturer is "tooled up" for a certain product—and it will have take anything up to five years of steady investment an work to reach that point—and a new invention i submitted which may be intrinsically excellent bu would require substantial modification in productio planning, what is he to do? He can defer his production, or he can eschew the innovation. Whic is economically right and which course would mos benefit the consumer? Obviously a vast number o factors come into that question. In my experienc manufacturers seldom "pass up" any serious invention lightly. And if it is good and demanded, it wi be adopted—but not necessarily immediately it i made known. Even in wartime production, wher no question of profit is involved, to interrup production in order to improve the product ma be extremely unwise, and many excellent inventio have been turned down for that reason.

I should like to know what "major discoveries have languished in Departments because firms wer not *interested;* is it not more usually because th firms were not apprised? The Departments (wit the limited exception of the M.O.S. and D.S.I.R. have simply not got the machinery for putting thei inventions in front of respective industries.

I hope and believe that a primary function of th N.R.D.C. will be actively to inform industry abou Departments' inventions. Considering "the ingeniou ideas of the Little Man" may be amusing, interestin and laborious, but it is, in opinion founded on m 28 years of experience, not likely to be technicall or socially profitable. I imagine that to encourag casual inventors of gadgets to hope that they will b fostered by the N.R.D.C., is merely to increase th degree of disappointment to which they are alread vulnerable.

W. E. P. JOHNSON

[Ritchie Calder writes: "I do not want to get cross-purposes with the Executive Director of Powe Jets Ltd. As a Government-owned company, is an outstandingly successful prototype of the Nationa Research Development Corporation; and, as patent expert, Mr. Johnson has been responsible fo nearly 2,000 jet-patents which will be a lavish sourc of dollars in the form of royalties. I would ask him however, what would have happened to jet-propulsio if it had not been sponsored by the Government

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I was not impugning the Patent Laws, the intentions of which are irreproachable. So were those of the Education Acts; but, until the extension of public financed scholarships, they did not provide equal opportunity for those who could not afford to go beyond an elementary education. That is true of inventors who have not had the resources either to develop or sustain their patents.

The zip-fastener was patented in Chicago in 1879; the specification was basically the same as the present product. It was peddled unsuccessfully among American firms and was allowed to lapse. A similar idea was patented in 1904; the patent was acquired by Nobel Explosives Ltd. in 1911 and the familiar zip came on the commercial market in 1918.

The familiar argument of the 'ice-boxers' that a product must wait on the method is as unprofitable as the chicken-or-the-egg. It is like saying cigarette-making should have awaited automatic-machinery.

I do not suggest that employee-inventors should be paid twice. My point was that their discoveries are the firm's to use or to withhold. It was an 'ice-box' not a reward question. Nor did I suggest that firms should not be allowed to finance developments by the return from patent monopoly. But that should not apply to a fundamental discovery freely disclosed by the scientists as a contribution to pure knowledge.

The 'ice-box' argument I was discussing included *both* the abuse of monopoly *and* the inertia of commerce and it allowed for the legitimate use of the 'ice-box'—provided that the community had a pass-key."—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

CATHOLICS AND POLITICS

SIR,—(1) Mr. Binns is wrong in thinking that the point of this discussion is "whether the Church does or does not intervene in politics." Intervention is self-evident. But in my original letter I plainly argued that the Church has the right to intervene in self-defence, i.e. when her organisation or teaching is attacked by the politicians.

(2) Liberalism. What exactly did the Popes condemn? "The Church, in condemning Liberalism, had no intention of condemning every party which might describe itself as Liberal." (Leo XIII). Gladstone has nothing to do with it. What the Popes condemned was a new and hostile religion—a compound of atheism, secularism, and relativity in faith and morals.

In particular, Leo singled out the doctrine that man is a law unto himself, and in so doing put his finger on the philosophic link between liberalism and totalitarianism. For "man a law unto himself" very easily becomes "the State a law unto itself." This is the paradox of the *Contract Social* and the reason why Rousseau has been claimed by both individualists and collectivists as their prophet. It also explains why the Catholic Church, which preaches the subjection of both State and individual to the Moral Law, should have been persecuted by both Liberals and Nazis. And now by the Communists.

(3) Freedom of conscience. In politics, economics and science where truth is relative (e.g. *laisser-faire* in 1845, controls in 1945) freedom is obviously essential. But in religion, where truth is absolute—at least it was always considered so, until some Protestants began to take a pride in proving themselves wrong—freedom may indeed be tolerated, in order to avoid the greater evil of persecution, but it can never be more than a necessary evil: one cannot boast that one has not got the truth.

The other point is this. All will agree that freedom to do what you like irrespective of right and wrong is not liberty but license. Rousseau called it a slavery and he was no Christian. But surely the slavery of error is no less real than the slavery of sin? If we are not free to *act*, why should we be free to *believe*, irrespective of right and wrong? Actions commonly flow from beliefs. It was so with Hitler.

In short, freedom of conscience and the other freedoms quoted by Mr. Binns may be good and useful as expedients, but to make of them a religion, as Liberalism does, is indeed a "pestilential heresy."

RICHARD KEPPEL

SIR,—It is time someone produced the only possible answer to Mr. Lunn.

He maintains that the Roman Church never interferes in politics, unless it is persecuted. This remarkable claim, which would involve re-writing the whole of European history from the accession of Constantine down to the recent Italian elections, is clearly not to be rebutted by any number of instances to the contrary. If a man maintains that the earth is flat, or that whales live on land, it is plain that he is beyond the reach of anything so trivial as the evidence.

I will not therefore argue that Mr. Lunn's opinions are wrong, but will content myself with pointing out that they are heretical; the official doctrine is that the Church not only does but should interfere in politics. Mr. Lunn has apparently overlooked the Syllabus of Errors which accompanied the Encyclical *Quanta Cura* of 1864, and which stigmatised as erroneous the following doctrines:

> That the Roman Pontiff ought to come to terms with progress, liberalism, and the new civilisation;
>
> That foreigners in Catholic countries ought to be allowed to practise their own religion there;
>
> That the Church has no power to employ force or any other temporal power, direct or indirect;
>
> That Catholics can approve of a system of education separated from the Catholic faith and the Church's power.

It is really unfortunate for Mr. Lunn that Pius IX, having thus tactlessly let the cat out of the bag, should have proceeded shortly afterwards to proclaim his own infallibility. R. B. HAMILTON

The Knowe, Woodland Drive, Nottingham.

ERITREA AND SOMALIA

SIR,—Mr. Merlin's history is as faulty as his understanding of the present position. He states that the Ottoman Empire over the Arab countries was dissolved because of charges of barbarity and maladministration. But the Arabs were liberated in the cause of nationality and self-determination of peoples. Then he writes of Eritrea and Somalia as "Italian colonies." But by the Treaty of Peace Italy renounced all her rights to the Territories, and Mr. Churchill, Mr. Eden and Mr. Bevin have affirmed that the colonies are lost to her. It is unthinkable that they should be returned.

The charge against Italy is that she used Eritrea and Somalia as bases of invasion against Ethiopia, and that she exploited the natives for a few thousands of her colonists. That is borne out by those who have the right to speak, *e.g.*, Brigadier Longrigg, who was the chief administrator in Eritrea and the historian of the British occupation, who wrote that "the Somalis have a positive hatred of their ex-masters."

Mr. Merlin's remarks about Ethiopian administration are equally misplaced. Miss Perham, in her recent book on the Government of Ethiopia, remarks that "the speed and ease with which the Emperor's administration has been re-established is very impressive." She remarks, too, on "the impression of eager intelligence and vitality which is given by the people." The last years have shown extraordinary progress in the economic and social conditions, and above all in education.

The country now called Eritrea, or at least the greatest part of it, was an integral part of Ethiopia till the Italian aggression, and is inhabited by people who are in every way akin to the inhabitants of North Ethiopia. It is, too, a vital outlet for Ethiopia to the sea. It should be restored to Ethiopia.

For Somalia there may be some period of trusteeship. If so, Ethiopia should have a part as a joint trustee; and the aim should be to prepare the Somalis for self-government—not independence—in a larger political and economic whole, that will include all their people and the Ethiopians.

NORMAN BENTWICH,

Hollycot, Chairman, Ethiopic Association

Vale of Health, N.W.3.

SIR,—I must correct a few of the errors of fact contained in Miss Pankhurst's letter on the former

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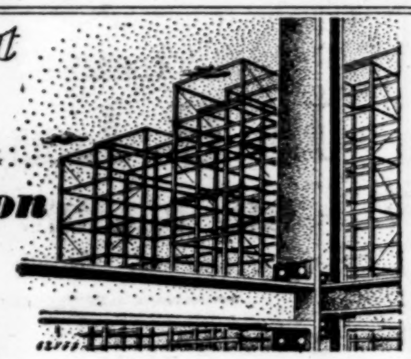

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Italian Colonies. She asserts: "It was intended that they (the Italian Colonies) should revert to Ethiopia, from which they were annexed by Italy in the latter part of the nineteenth century."

As a matter of fact, former Italian Somaliland has never belonged to Ethiopia; the only part of Eritrea that has belonged to Ethiopia in fairly recent times is the central Eritrean plateau whilst the Western Lowlands and the Danakil country have never belonged to Ethiopia and Massawa has not been in Ethiopian hands for hundreds of years.

Miss Pankhurst goes on to write: "In Somaliland the Italians permitted no school at all for the people of the country." In the year 1938-39, however, 2,946 native pupils attended elementary and technical schools in Somaliland; schools existed in the principal coastal centres. Miss Pankhurst then asserts that both universal compulsory education and secondary education are established in Ethiopia.

She must however be aware of the fact that universal compulsory education is not even enforced in Addis Ababa and that many districts in Ethiopia do not have one school. According to a reliable estimate—estimate, because no census has ever been taken by the Ethiopian Government—possibly one per cent. of Ethiopia's inhabitants are literate.

Miss Pankhurst finally asserts that the people of Eritrea and Somaliland were "rigidly barred altogether from skilled trades" by Italy. I would be grateful could Miss Pankhurst quote an Italian law "rigidly barring altogether" natives from skilled trades. Before the war I had occasion to meet skilled Eritrean mechanics, tailors, carpenters, etc.

I hold no brief for Italian Trusteeship over her former colonies: many things were wrong with the Italian colonial administration. The Ethiopian Government may not be altogether to blame for the fact that it cannot effectively guarantee public order outside the towns or promote the ordered social and economic progress of its country. This, however, should not blind us to the fact that Ethiopia is one of the most backward States in the world, inhabited by a variety of peoples, many of which hate the dominant Amharas. **ARVID PARDO**

DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

SIR,—Mr. Dodgson scores an easy point by putting into my mouth words I did not use. I said I tolerated those who co-operated in achieving the Socialist end. This is very different from tolerating "only those people and views with which I agree." There are probably many people and views in the Communist Party and among Left Social Democrats all over the world with which I disagree; but I sink such disagreement in a common cause.

I added that I could conceive no reason for tolerating those who thwarted the Socialist end. At a time when Socialism alone can save humanity from horrible destruction, to tolerate the enemies of Socialism to any extent not imposed by expediency seems to me just silly. I thought so long ago when I was a Social Democrat. I have not changed my opinion since.

As to Mr. Dodgson's second point, obviously new circumstances require adaptation of new *means* to ends. To recognise that is the essence of Marxism. But if I were to modify the Socialist *end*, I should cease to call myself a Socialist. Above all, I should refrain from excommunicating as bad Socialists men who had the guts to stick to their guns while I ran away. **ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON**

53 Victoria Road, Oxford.

THE SCIENCE OF CRIMINOLOGY

SIR,—In his review of two recent publications (with which I am in no way personally connected) your reviewer, Mr. Maurice Richardson, calls criminology "a semi-bogus branch of science," and refers to "that atmosphere of unreality which is inseparable from official criminology."

While gratefully acknowledging the "semi," I might perhaps make one or two brief comments on his remarks.

In the first instance I do not think that official criminology is any more "semi-bogus" and unrealistic than many other, older and much more favourably placed, branches of knowledge. To be fair, one should bear in mind that criminology, as a branch of academic teaching and research, has been in existence in this country only for a very short period of time, and that it has therefore not yet had much of a chance to be either bogus or real. Even to-day the number of University posts in the subject is extremely small (there is, in fact, in addition to the London University Readership and the Cambridge Department of Criminal Science, only one further lectureship, the one at Oxford established last autumn).

Secondly—and this is perhaps an even more vital point—in hardly any other field is it so difficult for the research worker to get access to the existing material, human or documentary, which is essential for that more realistic kind of study which the present writer is just as anxious to promote as Mr. Richardson. It is in the nature of things that the material required is largely in the hands of authorities not always willing to make it fully accessible to research workers from outside. There are, as the present writer has every reason to acknowledge with gratitude, notable exceptions to this, but they are fairly rare. In spite of such difficulties, however, I should like to assure Mr. Richardson that a few research schemes are actually being carried out at present in this country which, when completed and published, will, I hope, convince him that official criminology is not entirely unaware of its responsibilities.

Moreover, I should like to use this opportunity to draw attention to and to support very strongly your plea, made in the London Diary of the same issue, that if the death penalty should now be abolished for an experimental period, research on the lines indicated by you should be initiated without delay. Apart from other considerations, there may well occur within the next few years a purely statistical increase in convictions for murder as the result of the abolition because, for instance, juries may become less reluctant to return a verdict of murder instead of taking refuge in one of manslaughter. The rise in juvenile delinquency after the passing of the Children and Young Persons Act, 1933, was at that time by many experts regarded as at least in part due to the greater sympathy with which the public began to look at the modernised Juvenile Courts. Without careful research it will hardly be possible at the end of the trial period to distinguish between a real and a purely statistical increase in murder, a confusion which may well lead to wrong conclusions. Such research, however, can be done only if full access is given to the available material. **DR. H. MANNHEIM,**
Reader in (official and semi-bogus)
Criminology, University of London.

REPLANNING OXFORD

SIR,—I was astonished to read the review of *Oxford Replanned* in the NEW STATESMAN & NATION for May 1st. It is a pity that your reviewer did not know the facts before making wild statements about "the wayward, wanton natures of the Oxford Dons." The University as such has taken no decision at all about the proposal to cut a road through Merton Field. On the other hand, the University has committed itself to the expenditure of something in the neighbourhood of £1,000 to fight the projects of the Gas Company. I hope that other statements of facts in the review will bear closer investigation.

Brasenose College,
Oxford. **W. T. S. STALLYHAM,**
Vice-Chancellor of the Oxford University

POLISH PRESS

SIR,—In my letter published in your last issue the word "censorship" was mistakenly printed as "ownership," thus ascribing to me an untrue statement.

I would be very grateful indeed if you would correct this mistake in your next issue.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Some twenty-five miles south of Salerno the road strikes inland at the town of Eboli and enters the barren, limestone wilderness of the ankle of Italy, the no-man's land between Calabria and Apulia. It is a treeless region of steep, monotonous chalk marked by hill-top villages; the inhabitants are consumed by malaria, dazed by poverty and starvation; neglected throughout the centuries they have been left to live in the lowest state of human apathy. Not only, in the local proverb, did Christ go no farther than Eboli; the Romans had stopped there, too, keeping their garrisons to the main roads. Western civilisation, except by some accidental mark, has hardly any depth in this country, and the people live now as they must have lived there thousand years ago in the motionless world of primitive magic and the unallayed pain of the human lot on earth.

This region, which is called Lucania, was chosen for the exile of the politically disaffected under Fascism. Among them in 1935 at the beginning of the Abyssinian war was Mr. Carlo Levi, a painter by profession and a doctor by training. He arrived there in handcuffs and spent his time first of all in a poor place, Grassano. Later on he moved to a village even more wretched, Gagliano, and his book *Christ Stopped at Eboli** is an account of the life there. It is one of the most absorbing books that I have read for many years. Exact in observation, experienced and compassionate in his view of men and women, little preoccupied with his personal sufferings in this mournful and infected place and untempted by rhetoric, Mr. Carlo Levi has had the power to make his forgotten people seem as close and as astonishing to ourselves as our own neighbours are. The quality we admired in the Italian films since the war, something fresh, overwhelmingly human—so that we had the impression, at last, after years of ideological hatred, of reviving and cleaning our eyes with the rediscovery of what men and women are—that quality is in this book, with the addition of a sense of moral gravity. One puts down *Christ Stopped at Eboli* with a positive sense—almost dead in contemporary literature—that the resources of the civilised mind are enormous; shut in by Fascism, they have simply toughened and become more dense.

Gagliano, at Mr. Levi's first sight of it, seemed to be a collection of odd white hovels blackened inside by millions of flies. The village rode on a jagged saddle rising above deep ravines of white clay. The houses appeared to be slipping on these crumbling slopes. Every year, after the rains, a few of them were wrecked by landslides; the year before, the village church had gone, and the houses that remained seemed to be suspended over a pocked and moon-like landscape, without grass or trees. Many had no windows. Over all doorways hung the black, ragged pennants put up either for All Saints' Day or because of a death, and left to rot there until the end of time. There were no shops. There was no inn. The only impressive thing, architecturally, was a huge public lavatory put up by the Fascists, visited only by chickens and by children who sailed boats in the pans. There were two social classes in Gagliano: the gentry which meant the two doctors, the local party boss, the schoolmaster, the drunken priest, and one or two relics of families which had had money in the past; and the peasants. There were also a few political exiles, but they hardly formed a group, for they were not allowed to speak to one another. In the evenings, at a wider part of the village, the gentry sat on a wall overlooking the ravine, and there engaged in the rancours and slanders which were their obsession, adding chapters to feuds that went back to the crimes of earlier generations and, especially (as far as Mr. Levi could trace) to the times of brigandage in the nineteenth century. (These quarrels with their stories of stabbings, poisonings, adulteries and theft, recall the appalling family stories of Verga's Sicilian novels.) On the other side of the street the male peasants lined up in exhausted silence and hunger. They walked every day, as the peasants of Extremadura do, three or four hours to their work.

The gentry pounced upon Mr. Levi at once. They were Fascists for self-protection, and they did not mind his politics. What they wanted, just as much as the peasants, was a doctor; the two local ones were ignorant. No one, for example, had heard of a stethoscope, and the women who made up the prescriptions were accused of trying to poison people for family ends. To gentry and peasant alike, Mr. Levi was the god-like stranger. He appeared to them as Columbus appeared to the Indians. Though he was a painter by profession now and had not practised medicine for years, he was forced to go from house to house visiting the sick and dying, though he had brought no medicines with him, while the peasants knelt and kissed his hands. They were the outcasts whom God had forgotten. And what outcasts! The population of Gagliano was 1,200; but there were 2,000 Gagliano men in the United States, and the village had become a matriarchy. There was the most rigid Oriental attitude to the relations of the sexes on the surface; no man and woman could meet alone or talk to each other except in the presence of others, and no age was thought by the peasant to free one of the irresistible temptations of the flesh. And yet, because of the emigration, a great number of the children were illegitimate.

> Almost all the priests have children, and no one sees in this fact any dishonour reflected upon their calling. If God does not take them to Himself when they are little, they are sent to a parochial school at Potenza or Melfi. The letter-carrier at Grassano, a spry old man with a slight limp, and a fine handle-bar moustache, was renowned and revered in the village because, like Priam, he was said to have 50 children. Twenty-two or twenty-three of them belonged to his two or three wives; the rest scattered about the village and its surroundings. . . . He was called "King" on account either of his surpassing virility or his regal moustache and his children, of course, were known as "princes."

The women who had many lovers—there were twenty such women in Gagliano—were regarded as witches and were expert in magic and love philtres, said to be made of catamenial blood. One of these became Mr. Levi's servant, and from her he learned the secrets of village magic. She was a tall and shapely woman of 41, wrinkled with age and yellow with malaria, who had had 17 children by 15 different men, and Mr. Levi gives a description of her which is vivid despite the evidently mediocre translation:

> A small head, in the shape of a lengthened oval, covered with a veil, rose above her impressively large and erect body, which breathed an animal vigour. Her forehead was straight and high, half-hidden by a lock of smooth black hair; her almond-shaped opaque black eyes had whites with blue and brown veins in them like those of dogs. Her nose was thin and slightly hooked; her wide mouth with thin pale lips, somewhat turned down at the corners in bitterness, opened when she laughed, over powerful sparkling wolf-like teeth. Her face as a whole had a strongly archaic character, not classical in the Greek or Roman sense, but stemming from an antiquity more mysterious and cruel which had sprung always from the same ground, and which was unrelated to man, but linked with the soil and its everlasting animal deities. There were mingled in it cold sensuality, hidden wrong, irony, natural cruelty, impenetrable ill-humour and immense passive power, all these bound together in a stern, intelligent and malicious expression. . . . Hers was not the proverbial kindly wisdom of an old woman, limited to an impersonal tradition, nor the gossip of a busybody; it was the cold passive awareness, where life was reflected pitilessly and without any moral judgment . . . . Like all the women in these parts, who do the work of men, she could carry the heaviest weights. She took a barrel that held seven gallons to the fountain and brought it back full on her head, without even steadying it with her hands which were busy holding her child, clambering over the stones of the steep street with the agility of a goat.

The summer sun stunned the shadeless village. Mr. Levi found shade in a deep, newly dug grave in the cemetery while the old grave-digger knelt above him babbling the perpetual story of the brigands which had become the epic poem of the village. The rains came and washed away slabs of the hillside. The snows came. At Christmas the priest was drunk, forgot his sermon, read a letter from a soldier instead; there was a riot in the church and the congregation sang a popular song. Because of an intrigue among the gentry Mr. Levi was forbidden to practise medicine, and the same day he was sent for on behalf of a dying peasant in a near-by village. He was obliged to refuse; a deputation came and, after a long delay, he was allowed to go. But the delay had been fatal. At this point, something like an insurrection was planned by the peasants. To avenge themselves upon the authorities they set out to burn the village down and massacre the inhabitants: such outbreaks occur in every generation in this region, and are the expression of the bottled-up hatred of the peasants for the State which does nothing for them and which robs them of their animals, when they cannot pay their taxes. It is the underlying theme of Mr. Levi's book: the permanent hatred of these primitive people for the civilised and urban notion of the State throughout the ages. Mr. Levi was able to calm them, but the bewildered peasants were left with all their emotion on their hands and with no way of releasing it. The appropriate magic had to be found, and what they did is profoundly revealing: a group of them went to the village, disguised themselves, and acted the scandal as a brilliant and grotesque satirical play in the street, making up the words as they went along, and even removing a pig's bladder filled with blood from the "dying" man when they came to the operation scene while the doctors and authorities quarrelled over him. They acted the play again and again up and down the village and went home satisfied.

Christ Stopped at Eboli is filled with incident and with small portraits of people, all of them strange, some of them very moving. The little hunchback postmaster who used to slip the doctor his letters so as to escape the censorship is charming. Donna Caterina, the real boss of the village and wife of the Party leader, is a scalding horror straight out of Verga. There is the schoolmaster who sat on the balcony in the sun talking to his friends, giving a skilful whack over his shoulder at his pupils within; the wretched priest sitting in the ruins of his intellect, with the chickens roosting on his books. Over all hung the apathy of their isolation, their hunger or their failure. "Niente," they said, again and again as the Spaniards (who so resemble them) say their perpetual "Nada." And, like the Spaniards, too, they asked, not "How are you?" but "What have you eaten?" when they met. Gagliano, except for its malaria, might, indeed, be some Spanish village of the poorer parts and not as low in human misery as the hamlets of Los Hurdes, the petrol-tin shacks of Andalusia, or the communities of cave dwellers.

The recurring theme of Mr. Levi's book is, as I have said, the hostility of the peasants of these lands to the State; not merely to the modern State, Fascist or anti-Fascist, but to the State as it has been understood by the urban man from the beginning of civilisation. The peasants of the south belong to pre-civilisation; every act and thought has been formed thousands of years ago. To break up the big *latifundias* and divide the land would only increase poverty. I suppose Mr. Levi to be an anarchist. At any rate, for him "autonomy," the "organic federation," the "self-governing rural community" alone can change the condition of these people, for nothing else can have meaning for their minds. That was the conclusion he came to after his exile in Lucania. The irony is that, if there is one more world war and civilisation is fatally broken, his wish may come true. In the meantime the children will go on crying after the stranger in Metara and the towns of that country. He will think they are calling out for pennies, but they are not. They are calling out, "Give me some quinine."

V. S. Pritchett

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* *Christ Stopped at Eboli.* By Carlo Levi. Trans. by Frances Frenaye. *Cassel.* 9s. 6d.

COMMINATION

Pilgrim of the Absolute. Selections from the writings of LEON BLOY. Trans. John Coleman and Harry Lorin Binsse. *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* 18*s.*

Men of genius who happen to be born considerably out of their time are at once pathetic, frightening, slightly ridiculous, and extremely valuable. The intensity of their being, and their fanaticism, dismay contemporaries, at the same time as they arouse admiration and pity. Their outrageous emphasis seems absurd, but it is seldom that they fail to draw attention to the importance of something their age conspires to ignore. At the apogee of bourgeois civilisation the figure of Léon Bloy—haggard, vituperative, consumed by love and hatred—appears like some latterday Savonarola. We may be exasperated by him; we may be horrified, or set on edge, by his violence; we may even be bored by his insistence; but it is impossible to remain unimpressed by so obdurate and passionate a soul.

Because of the repetitiveness and the monotonous vociferations of his style, it is something of a labour to read through any of Bloy's books. To receive the full impact of his message, we must abandon ourselves to his own state of mind; and to do this involves a great risk, for Bloy lived habitually on the wavy, manic-depressive line which divides extreme clear-sightedness from lunacy. The dilemma is a real one, and Jacques and Raïssa Maritain, who are responsible for the present anthology, have done the only thing which could be done to make Bloy's writings at all digestible. Yet, although the passages chosen are fully representative and cover most of the author's work, an effect of strenuous monotony is not avoided, because Bloy as a thinker can hardly be described as "evolving" at all: like most prophets, he was a man of few ideas and seems to have thought it unnecessary to vary his manner of expressing them.

Monsieur and Madame Maritain, who evidently loved and revered Léon Bloy personally, are naturally at pains to mitigate the repulsive effect of the man's literary personality. They were wise, therefore, to open this book with Bloy's letters to his fiancée—an extraordinary performance which shows him to us at his most human and pathetic.

> I am sad *by nature* as one is by nature slight or fair-haired. I was born sad, deeply, horribly sad, and if I am possessed with the most violent desire for joy, it is by virtue of the mysterious law which attracts contraries. If you become my wife, you will have a sick person whom you must nurse. You will sometimes see me pass, without known cause or perceptible transition, from the liveliest joy to the darkest melancholy. But here is a very strange thing and one which I do not presume to explain. Despite the powerful attraction exercised over me by the vague idea of happiness, my nature, more powerful still, inclines me toward suffering, toward sadness, perhaps toward despair.

That is revealing; it helps to place the writer among the grimmer figures of the early church, or perhaps in sixteenth-century Spain, where his *jusqu' au-boutiste* attitude to human existence would have found more sympathy and understanding than it did in nineteenth-century France. The views upon which Léon Bloy made war are those summed up by the smug proverbs dear to the bourgeois world of his day—the materialism and caution against which Flaubert, in his cynical fashion, also inveighed. This is the negative side of Bloy's mind, and it is the least interesting today, even if we do not consider the shrill violence with which it expresses itself an obvious sign of weakness. Pride is the sin which lies in wait for those who are always denouncing their fellowmen, and it is the "amplified" voice of pride that we hear behind Bloy's hysterical abuse of contemporary writers. "I am an ocean of contempt," he cries, "and I was the one who hurled the block of ice which burst the sides of the *Titanic.*" Again and again in these pages we are reminded of Dostoevsky haranguing Turgenev—of the more self-conscious martyrs—of Georges Sorel referring to himself (in an appendix to *Réflexions sur la Violence*) as "un pauvre vieillard sans importance." What can it have been except pride which led Bloy to wallow so often in the same kind of false humility?

Léon Bloy was firmly convinced by his own very dubious statement that "one sees this world's evil accurately only by exaggerating it." Unfortunately for this view, the emphasis it entails quickly defeats its own end, forcing those who hold it to scream ever louder and louder. When the occasion really seems to require them, Bloy's scorn and loathing are impressive; more often we feel a total lack of charity in this man's dealings with everyone who was not miserably poor or who took a more moderate view than he of the twofold duty. It does not surprise me that the editors of this book have not cared to include the appalling passage in *Le Désespéré,* where the repentant Véronique insists on having all her teeth hacked out, in order to ruin the beauty which has led her into temptation. To a mind unversed in the extreme fantasies of sainthood, this passage must seem scandalous—an insult to human nature as gross as a detail from some chronicle of Belsen or Buchenwald. Yet the whole incident is described with an unforgettable power: it gives—perhaps better than anything in this selection—the measure of Bloy's ruthless genius.

One of the chief troubles of this polemicist was that he could never make up his mind about the position of art in his scheme of things. Here he contradicts himself again and again. "Literature, for which I do not live and which is not my aim. . ." "Splendour of style is not a luxury, it is a necessity." "Indeed, the contempt . . . of modern Christians for all the manifestations of a superior art is beyond bearing. . ." "Hello convinced himself . . . that there could be a *Christian* art, without for a moment suspecting the strife experience has taught us emerges from that phrase . . . Art is aboriginally a parasite of the skin of the first Serpent." And so on. A decision one way or the other might well have made Bloy's work more digestible. Yet, when all is said, he remains a writer who cannot be ignored. He has the virtues of his defects: a passionate love for the tortured Christ, an undeviating belief in salvation by faith, a steadfast pity for the abject; tenderness and generosity towards all genuine innocence and simplicity. In this apocalyptic age such a man should achieve a renown much wider than that accorded to him in his lifetime.

The translation reads well.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

ORDEAL BY PLANNING

Ordeal by Planning. BY JOHN JEWKES. *Macmillan,* 12*s.* 6*d.*

This diverting book is not an objective study of economic organisation, but a political pamphlet. "Planning" is the label for all the activities of the present Government which the author dislikes. There are beings with "a turbulent craving for a new order" with "a remarkably over-simplified conception of their task," "always creating problems for themselves," "impatient at the existence of the consumer" and "with a morbid fear of the price system." Having created this unrecognisable macabre crew—by turns wicked, timid, confused, greedy for power, ignorant and incompetent, the author attacks them with great spirit, and no pity—ruthlessly plunging the bayonet into the sacks he has just stuffed with straw. The author makes his attitude clear very early. Planning "originated, as many evil ideas originated, in Germany in the war of 1914-18" and the struggle between central planners and their opponents has as its stakes "everything that is bound up with the uniqueness of personality and the Christian ethic." Nationalist and religious prejudices are dragged in to support an economic case. Professor Jewkes's conception of the role of Government in economic matters in the post-war period is simple; it is that the state should "confine itself to its legitimate role of restricting the volume of money sufficiently to prevent domestic inflation"—all beyond that is planning and damnation. His faith in the operation of the price mechanism, once this simple task has been performed, is absolute but unargued. Nor is his method of argument always above reproach. For example, he suggests that the Supreme Planners put the best gloss on their achievements, "which they can do since they alone are in possession of all the facts." But then, remembering that nearly everything upon which the Supreme Planners base their judgment is published, he explains a few lines later that the public "confused by masses of statistics is robbed of the power to judge," a strange confession for a professional economist. And there is a tendency, common among pamphleteers, to put undocumented beliefs into the minds of his victims and then demolish them by faulty proofs. For example, on page 117, he ascribes to the planners the belief that only those engaged in manufacture increase national wealth. He proves this is nonsense by comparing the British and American proportions so engaged, but conveniently ignores agriculture in both cases, though later he attacks the planners for aiming to increase agricultural production in the U.K.

The book is well documented with Ministerial quotations (not all of them defensible) and with some pages of devastating examples of the absurd final interpretation of measures and orders which began by seeming to make good sense. But an economist of Professor Jewkes's experience and quality should not write as though he were living in an ivory tower looking over the Cheshire dales, maintaining distateful contact with the outside world by means of *Hansard* the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Telegraph.* He knows as well as any of us what the current problems are, and in his first post-war book we expect to find some of the constructive and positive attitude of mind which was of such value during the war. Instead we get witty and destructive criticism which it is salutary for us to read, but which leads us back to the nineteenth century. But this disappointment should not stop planners and the planned from reading about their ordeals. Many of his attacks have justice, though some of them were more effective last summer than now. The inflationary pressure undoubtedly made any of the six kinds of planning more difficult—the present Budget goes a long way to clear that. I have always believed that the price weapon could be used more than it has been, though I should be frightened for it alone to control the use of steel, the distribution of capital investment or the drive for export. But planning against too great a natural pressure of prices is hard going.

Undoubtedly there has been confusion about the possibilities and aims of planning and the 1948 Survey can claim to have made these somewhat clearer. And lastly it must be admitted that up to a few months ago the prestige of the Government—as well as of the Government's planning policy—suffered from conflicting Ministerial statements which differed both in fact and in mood. With the coming of E.R.P. planning will move into a new phase. The planners can take a longer view, long-run problems can be given more attention as the short-run crisis is averted, and in our plans must be integrated (if Professor Jewkes will permit the word) those of the rest of Europe and of our Colonies.

HUGH WEEKS

A BOVARYST

Tempestuous Petticoat. BY CLARE LEIGHTON. *Gollancz.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Miss Leighton, whose wood-engravings and writings reveal a devotion to the English countryside, now presents us with a portrait in prose of her mother, the least bucolic of women. It is brutally vivid—as if Sem had drawn a caricature of a woman who thought she was sitting to Boldini. Mrs. Leighton emerges as an extravagantly developed example of a species that is not uncommon.

In 1912 a considerable stir was made by a book now seldom mentioned, Jules Gaultier's *Le Bovarysme.* The author gave the name "Bovarysme" to man's faculty for seeing himself as other than he is, and to the concomitant hatred of reality. Having shown these tendencies to be widespread in societies as well as in individuals, he argued that they were often beneficial, that they assisted survival and encouraged useful changes. Illusion, that is to say, has been evolved as a weapon in the struggle for existence. Later psychologists have given the name "*persona*" to the image each of us makes of himself. Often the *persona* is conspicuously dominant; the pursuit of self-respect rather than of respect from others, usually, I suspect, governs human behaviour. Ambition might be defined as the desire to reinforce our good opinion of ourselves by obliging others to share and reflect it. If the *persona* becomes too obsessive, we end in a madhouse, persuaded that we are Napoleon or Christ. Short of this, we find the mythomaniac, who does not know whether he is telling lies or the truth; the novelist, who safely canalises his fantasies in his work; and the normal being who sails through life supported by the conviction that he is better-looking, better-born, cleverer and in every way more virtuous and more attractive than in fact he is. The usefulness of such delusions is hard to exaggerate. If we saw ourselves as others see us, would life seem worth living?

The lady described in *Tempestuous Petticoat* was as exorbitant a Bovaryst as one could hope to find outside Bedlam. She earned a comfortable living by the manufacture of serial stories for *The Daily Mail* and other Northcliffe publications in the years before the first war. Her writings can hardly have been more remote from reality than her opinions about herself. Everything about her was second-rate and second-hand. Imagine Emma Bovary born Anglo-Irish and shabby-genteel: then endow her with an indefatigable pen, and you have Mrs. Leighton. Her gusto, her magnetism and—one must suppose—her physique enabled her to make four men share her illusions, a hen-pecked husband (who wrote stories for boys) and three ageing suitors. She was proud to be a coquette, a type strangely admired in Victorian and Edwardian days. (Fashion having changed, we now have a cruder word for women who seek to excite desires they have no intention of satisfying.) The visits, the presents, the decorous lusts, of her goggle-eyed admirers fed Mrs. Leighton's vision of herself as a modern Cleopatra. Belief in her exalted social station was equally important to her, but more difficult to maintain, since she did not move in what was then called "good society." Her life, however, and the lives of her unfortunate children, were governed by a bizarre code designed to bolster the sense of belonging to the upper class. Superstitious as a Calabrian peasant, lacking all intellectual or æsthetic culture, she proclaimed her defects as proofs of her superiority, making her own tastes the criterion of elegance. The longing to be glamorous, shown in the elaboration of her attire and in the exercise of conscious charm, was incongruously allied with the practices of a slattern. Outlines of stories, newspaper-cuttings and unpaid bills accumulated in countless bundles, cluttering the tables and piled in the corners of rooms. Mice gambolled in the oatmeal with which she cleaned her skin, her silk drawers would be stuffed into the horn of the gramophone. In her fears she was no less fantastic than in her vanities. She wore vests and petticoats of flannel in even the hottest weather; even for a short journey she dosed herself with Chlorodyne, nor would she touch shellfish or mushrooms, since these were bound to produce ptomaine poisoning. She was convinced, moreover, that if anyone made a drawing or a photograph of her she would quickly die.

Her self-complacency depended upon constant self-deception, and there is something pathetic in the naive snobbery that betrayed her hunger for reassurance. Here are a few gems from the philosophy she sought to impose upon her children:

> "You'll always find that it's the lower classes who rush to pay their bills the moment they arrive. This excessive desire to pay promptly is a sign of lack of breeding. The sensible, aristocratic thing is to wait, and only to pay them when they are accompanied by County Court threats."
>
> "No lady ever gets a chilblain. It's only common people who have them."
>
> "The chief thing I object to about flats is that they are immoral . . . because everything you do can be seen and known by your neighbours. I always say the distinction between immorality and romance lies entirely in this: nothing is immoral which is secret, and consequently hurts no one else."
>
> "In the same way that you never see a common person in Bond Street—though there is no barricade to prevent them walking there—you will never find the lower classes in a hansom cab. A hansom is surrounded by an aura of romance which would frighten a common person, and make him think he was being wicked."
>
> "Little hats are meant for sex-starved, commonplace women that you can shovel up by the hundred, because they are so exactly alike. But a distinguished woman, with a dream, needs a large hat."
>
> "The really worth-while women are those who feel most at home in rich furs."
>
> "You can always tell whether people are well-bred or not by whether they love dogs."

Some of these remarks, taken out of their contexts, may seem too good to be true; and in her daughter's pages this ghastly woman does loom larger than life, like the creation of a great comic novelist. My impression, however, is that the author has drawn chiefly upon memory; and, moreover, that the cruelty of the portrait may not be wholly intended. Miss Leighton writes sometimes as if she was still a little under the spell of the Parma violets, the boas and the egotism, more often with amused indulgence, as if her mother were her spoilt child. The resulting book is vastly entertaining, and should be valuable to social historians centuries hence.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

ROOSEVELT

The Roosevelt I Knew. BY F. PERKINS. *Hammond.* 18*s.*

Citizen of the World—Franklin D. Roosevelt. BY ALDEN HATCH. *Skeffington.* 21*s.*

The casting of lots for President Roosevelt's mantle continues to be a vigorous sport on both sides of the Atlantic. Henry Wallace and his supporters claim that they are carrying on the New Deal tradition of economic justice, and the Yalta tradition of Big Three Unity; Mrs. Roosevelt and the Americans for Democratic Action claim that they are the inheritors of the true faith of progressivism at home, and support of democracy abroad, while Mr. Truman's gestures of liberalism at home and abroad serve to convince the electorate that he is attempting, with little success, to imitate the Roosevelt magic.

It is interesting, therefore, to search the numerous biographies of President Roosevelt which are

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now appearing for evidence of what was the essence of his politics. Unfortunately many of them tend merely to dramatise the known facts of the President's life. For instance Mr. Hatch's life of Roosevelt, though it is written in that chatty style of bogus intimacy which characterises the professional biographer, tells us little that wasn't already in the newspapers. Miss Perkins' book, on the other hand, lives up to its title *The Roosevelt I Knew*, and gives, not a complete life of the President, but a faithful account by a woman who was a member of his cabinet throughout his term of office.

Miss Perkins insists that there is no single key to Roosevelt's policies or his personality: "He left no political system, and no basis for a cult." She tells a most revealing story of the President being asked by a White House reporter whether he was a Communist, a Socialist or a Capitalist. Roosevelt denied all three imputations equally vigorously, and when the reporter pressed for an answer as to what his "philosophy" was, the President looked puzzled and replied "Philosophy? Philosophy? I am a Christian and a Democrat, that is all." Throughout his life the President was contemptuous of doctrinaires, and Miss Perkins agrees with Mr. Hatch and other biographers that he was always bewildered by economists (such as Keynes) or big business men (such as Morgan), because they represented to him equally strange, unnatural creatures who dealt with statistics not with persons.

Roosevelt's personality was as complex and difficult to analyse as the policies, which Miss Perkins sees as outgrowths of his character. "He was many things," she writes, "not clear, not simple, with drives and compulsions in a dozen different directions . . . the rich man's friend, the poor man's brother, the stern puritan conscience, the easy going, indulgent and forgiving friend of the irregulars."

Yet the New Deal, for all the chaos in which it was conceived, did have certain unifying principles. The drama of the War Years has tended to obscure these earlier achievements in the domestic field, but Miss Perkins, as Secretary of Labour, was deeply concerned with the social reforms of 1933-38, and her chapters on this subject make the book an indispensable source for students of the New Deal. In conclusion she says of this phase of Roosevelt's work: "The objective of all these plans was to make human life on this planet in this generation more decent. . . . What he cared about was improvement in people's lives. If economic changes were necessary, he would make them, but only to do a specific task. When he said of himself that he was 'a little left of centre,' he described accurately his thinking and feeling in political and economic matters." Because it is an attempt to estimate a great man whom the author knew intimately, and is not a campaign document to plead a cause or build a legend, this unpretentious work will be remembered long after far larger and better documented works are discarded and forgotten. Perhaps too it answers the question, "Was Roosevelt the friend or enemy of American Capitalism?" He never knew.

JOHN MORTON

NEW NOVELS

The Needle's Eye. By TIMOTHY PEMBER. *Cape.* 9s. 6d.

The Walled City. By ELSPETH HUXLEY. *Chatto and Windus.* 10s. 6d.

Dark Wedding. By RAMÓN J. SENDER. *Grey Walls Press.* 9s. 6d.

The Last Circle. By STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT. *Heinemann.* 10s. 6d.

The best contemporary writing is committed to striving after an increasing sharpness of effect, of paring away all but the fundamentals, of quickening the narrative with such a current of suggestion that, to the reader who knows how to respond, there will be meaning on the blank paper between the chapters. The suppression of the buttonholing, confident novelist (he made his exit together with the "gentle reader") has been one of the means towards this end. But the dangers are obvious, the failures all too familiar. The ambitious young writer goes in for dramatisation in a big way and smothers us with incident.

Timothy Pember is, however, more than an ambitious writer; he is a gifted one. His novel, *The Needle's Eye*, is carefully thought out and beautifully written. The narrative is always sensitive and intelligent, and there are at least two scenes—one in a sanatorium in Switzerland and the other in an Epsom-salt factory in England—which his readers will remember for a very long time. But how slow the whole thing is in getting under way, and how long it is for the final impression that it makes. Yes, the novel has its *longueurs*. This is not due to any spinning out of an insufficiency of material, never to any failure of insight or lack of ability to rise to a great occasion. The book is too long by a fifth because Mr. Pember never says to himself, "I am creating these scenes and these characters, I know more about them than anyone else, and if I cannot assert my authority a little and *tell* my readers, now and again, what they are probably too stupid to notice for themselves, then it is a very great pity indeed." It is Mr. Pember's refusal to do anything of the sort, his very discipline as a narrator, that makes his book duller than it should be. It is sometimes kinder to the reader to say that one's hero is an innocent young fool rather than set innocence and youth and folly into jerky motion.

There is something, too, that has to be said about Mr. Pember's theme. He tells a story, set in the nineteen-thirties, of class conflict in an English village. Harold Wick is a young man who, under the tutelage of Catherine, the daughter of a Socialist intellectual, learns something of the laws that govern society and (what is more interesting) his own emotions. But surely Catherine's father would have had a quieter time of it than Mr. Pember gives him? Policemen watch his house, he is taken off for questioning, on at least one occasion he is beaten up. This is over-dramatic. After all, quite a number of people thought Socialism fairly respectable, even as long ago as the England of the nineteen-thirties.

But, to avoid ending on this carping note, I must say that Catherine is a very successful creation. She is *really* intelligent without losing any of her femininity and is much too good for Harold.

Mrs. Huxley is an expert on colonial administration and her novel, *The Walled City*, which tackles this subject in East Africa could not fail to be interesting. But the interest is mainly documentary. As one might well imagine, the main conflict in the story is between a man who is what is popularly known as "the born civil servant" (anyway, he is cautious, meticulous, red-tape loving and his attitude to the natives and the territories under his administration is appropriately unimaginative) and Robert who is anything but a yes-man and very strongly questions the widely held belief that the introduction of Western methods to primitive communities is an unmixed blessing. While the story remains on this level it is sadly wooden. For some reason one thinks of a wooden camel with hinge joints; and when Priscilla, Robert's wife, begins to talk like a debating society the joints begin to creak.

> What you are saying [she remarks to her husband in the course of a family row] would put an end to all progress. Surely the age of a custom neither

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> proves it right nor protects it from mutilation. As things outlive their inspiration and become eventually vestigial. I suppose every one of our customs and beliefs is a sort of potential appendix.

Which is probably true enough to pass, but we have never the same confidence in Priscilla as a human being afterwards.

Much the best thing in the book is the study of Benjamin, an East African, who goes to Oxford and then returns to his native province where he sets up as a newspaper editor. In spite of his education Benjamin's main ambition is power, and he is not very particular how he gets that power. Yet he is a figure of pathos. He belongs neither to the east nor to the west, he is deracinated and bewildered, a nuisance to others and a misery to himself. Everything that Mrs. Huxley has to say about colonial administration in her book—and it is a very wise book—is implicit in her portrait of Benjamin and one feels rather sorry that, instead of going into the not very interesting private lives of her European characters, she did not build her book around him.

The Spanish writer Ramòn J. Sender is best known in this country for his novel about an abortive anarchist rising in the early thirties, *Seven Red Sundays*, a book which most of us understand better now than when it was first published. We no longer feel that violence is something that goes on somewhere else. Indeed, we have grown up so quickly to an understanding of this particular world that we may already be past *Dark Wedding*, past it in the sense that we understand it only too well.

He takes, as a fair sample of humanity, the degenerate and brutalised convicts of a penal settlement on a Central American island. He throws among them an innocent virgin, who, as might be expected, arouses passionate feelings. The convicts even organise a sort of raping roster but, at the same time, she does release a longing for beauty and purity among some of the inhabitants of the island—and more especially in a young schoolmaster who is the means of saving her. It is a tropical Walpurgis-night. If a story like this is going to inspire anything more than horror the characters should be built on some scale commensurate with the events. But, unfortunately, neither the schoolmaster nor the girl are of sufficient stature to lift the fabric out of the mud, and most of us will refuse to be fobbed-off with the optimistic poetic-symbolism that Sender uses to relieve his sombre picture. When, at the end, the happy pair decide to forgo their chance of leaving the island we know what he is driving at; they are choosing to live courageously in defiance of death and despair. But the myth never gets hold of the imagination. We think the couple are singularly ill-advised not to get into that launch.

Some time ago Mr. Somerset Maugham reproached us for using "magazine story" as a term of abuse. And he was right. Most of the best short stories have, as he pointed out, been published in magazines. But, at the same time, we have a pretty good idea of the criticism that is implied by the term: the superficial, the expected rather than the unexpected, the cosy rather than the disturbing, the lack of anything that can be called real sensibility. The stories contained in Stephen Vincent Benét's *The Last Circle* are this kind of magazine story. There are imitation Algernon Blackwood, some rather embarrassing excursions into fantasy, a mock profound story about the dawn of history and a number of straightforward patriotic American yarns. They are mainly remarkable for the way they skate round anything that can be called a real problem; and when a real one seems a little too large to be avoided it is served up in such a pre-digested form that even the most timid will not be scared into cancelling their subscriptions. There is also some verse.

P. H. Newby

BALLERINA

Margot Fonteyn. Cyril Beaumont. *Beaumont.* 6s.

The series in which this little book appears is called "Essays on dancing and dancers." It would therefore be unreasonable to expect a full length portrait of Margot Fonteyn, though one might have hoped for a rather fuller treatment of her in her dance roles. Mr. Beaumont confines himself to a brief chronological survey of the chief events of her dancing life, and ends with a few perceptive comments on her as a dancer, the considered praise of which is the more welcome because of the austere limits which Mr. Beaumont has set to his appreciation; no doubt in exasperated reaction against the embrassing lyricism which pervades most biographies of dancers.

Choreographers are so busy in England nowadays that it is not surprising this book has not caught up with the two last ballets in which Margot Fonteyn played a leading part: Massine's *Mam'zelle Angot* and Ashton's wonderful *Scènes de Ballet*. I am aware that Fonteyn was not cast for the part of Mam'zelle Angot at Covent Garden, but I have so far seen no dancer who could compare with her in it, or succeed in dividing one's attention with Alexander Grant's prodigious barber, in the first scene where they dance, each in their own orbit, in such brilliant counterpoint of mood and rhythm. It is not really a Fonteyn part, but it gives scope for her gift for mime and sparkling humour, which, strange to say, Mr. Beaumont, does not mention among her outstanding characteristics. Oddly enough he never speaks of *Façade* which provided Fonteyn with one of her wittiest early parts. It is unfortunate that he never saw *A Wedding Bouquet*. How did he contrive to miss that crazy, enchanting ballet, which convinced Gertrude Stein of Ashton's genius, and which was one of the most triumphant collaborations between choreographer, composer, scenographer and dancers? The betrayed flower-girl motif in *Nocturne* reappears, with an entirely different flavour, in the part of the slightly ridiculous, pathetic, nymphomaniac Julia. How often Margot has been betrayed on the stage! But never so brilliantly as in Helpmann's ejection of her from his bridal procession; and Margot Fonteyn, wrapt up in her poodle and her flowing black hair, was so engaging as to enlist all one's sympathies. But she always does enlist them in the highest degree. It may be, as Mr. Beaumont says, that she is not a dominant stage personality, but her warmth and charm pervade as with no other of our dancers; and in *Scènes de Ballet*, as once before in *The Wanderer*, a glittering, steely brilliance pierces the warmth. On the other hand, the superbly cold domination of Beryl Grey, as the Black Queen in *Checkmate* would, one feels, be quite foreign to her.

In spite of *Comus* and *Hamlet*, I think that Frederick Ashton has been Fonteyn's best contemporary choreographer. Apart from their long collaboration, their wit, musicality and Latin temperament make them perfect partners. But it may well be that a new choreographer will discover qualities still latent in Fonteyn, and one looks forward eagerly to seeing her in Roland Petit's ballet, and dancing with him. He is one of the few male dancers naturally endowed with a noble style.

There are nine full-page illustrations to the 20-page text. Most of them have caught the pose better than the expression of Margot Fonteyn's face. The picture on the cover is a Fonteyn I do not recognize.

Beryl de Zoete

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No. 951

Set by Thomas Smallbones.

A London schoolmaster this week circularised parents with adverse comments on his pupils' personal appearance. Competitors are invited to comment on the personal appearance of their teachers in ten lines of verse or 200 words of prose. Entries by May 18.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 948

Set by Maurice Cassel

An imaginary miscellany (*Turnpike Junior*) is to be compiled from the juvenilia of twentieth-century writers. Competitors are asked to submit plausible extracts, verse or prose.

Report by Maurice Cassel

To produce a broad parody of the adult style and attribute it to seven-year-old Tommy just isn't right. A self-conscious version of the mature style with the veneer well rubbed off does excellently for adolescence. The two types of juvenilia differ essentially in *outlook*. The right note for childhood was struck by H. J. Ryan and J. C. B. Date (as in Master Bentley's,

I like
A bike
But of course
I'd sooner have a horse).

Many of the other type of entry were too near the real thing. Verse entries abounded (especially an uncomfortable crop of nursery Eliots and Audens) but prose seemed the happier medium.

Of Terence Melican's alleged childhood *dicta*, I quote:

Raymond Mortimer (8): How tiresomely easy it is to deceive one's relations. They fall into two simple categories: those whom I let see me reading Proust behind a copy of the "*Boys' Own Paper*," and those whom I let see me reading the *B.O.P.* behind a volume of Proust.

I recommend, after eliminating in the final stages Norman Prouting, Harry Broadbent, David Hicks, Stanley Sharpless, L. G. Udall, Lakon and Helen Power, that the prizes be shared equally between the following:

Master Masefield:

There are many different kinds of boats,
Some have sails but most have funnels,
The sailors wear jerseys but the Captains wear coats
And are fond of leaning against the gunwales.
Some of these boats (they are really *ships*),
Come all the way from Egypt or France;
They are quite accustomed to making long trips
And are big or bigger than elephants.
But some however are really small,
And simply sail around the coast,
These are called tramps or coasters and all
Are usually carrying coal (or most).

H. J. R.

G.B.S. writes to his School Magazine.

Sir, In your current number you write: "G. Shaw disgraced the School by cheering for our opponents throughout the match." This is muddled thinking. A school consists of buildings, masters, and boys. Buildings cannot be disgraced by my cheers; masters and boys only if they are responsible for them, in this case both alike are guiltless, having consistently bullied me to cheer only for the School. Is your real meaning, then, that I disgraced myself? As the best critic (if worst player) of football in the school, it is my duty to cheer for skill and agility, not for their opposites. In last week's match our opponents displayed both; we displayed neither. In cheering the winners, then, I not only proved myself a good critic, in refusing to approve what was bad, but a decent human being as well. Yrs. G. B. SHAW.

L. E. J.

Graham Greene, from an early novel on School Life.

The Choir was practising in Chapel. Christopher could hear the pure notes of the trebles soaring up out of the Gothic dusk into the golden, sunset skies and mingling with the sweetness of new-mown grass. "The apple-tree, the singing and the gold." The phrase had occurred in something the Head had read to them—Euripides, was it?—and now Christopher felt he was on the verge of some Apocalyptic experience that would explain everything.

Suddenly Nottery appeared: pimply, unhealthy, with a face like a pudding. He was carrying a box.

"What have you got there?" asked Christopher.

"Only some butterflies for my collection," Nottery replied, sulkily.

Christopher opened the box and looked inside. Was this the meaning of life, after all: a box of dead and lovely butterflies in the gross hands of a Nottery? He turned away.

The voices of the trebles soared to the Throne.

H. A. C. EVANS.

Master B. Nichols. When I Grow Up.

When I grow up I want to have a little cottage in the country with ivy on the walls and some honeysuckle. There will be a lot of flowers in the garden and a pond with water lilies. I shall pretend that there are fairies in it and perhaps there will be and people will come to see the fairies in my garden, but if there are fairies they will not talk to anybody except me and if people want to know what they have said they will have to ask me. The cottage will have a thatched roof and will look very pretty. It will be old but it will have a bath-room inside. There will be a gardener to do the weeding and I shall just walk about and look at the flowers and show them to people.

J. C. B. DATE.

Arnold Bennett anticipates "The Card."

Amos Blackstone was a funny man. He lived in Hanley, which is in the Five Towns. In the Five Towns when you say a man is funny, you don't mean that he makes jokes. You mean he is a caution, and if you don't know what that is, you don't live in the Five Towns. For everyone there is up to snuff. Amos Blackstone was sharp. He knew a thing or two, and if there was a twinkle in his eye when he said "Hello" to a friend, his friend would say to himself: "Now what sort of trick is old Amos going to play on me?" Because Amos's tricks always made the Five Towns laugh. They would say: "Eh, that Amos Blackstone, he's a fair caution, he is!" But the man Amos tricked would look down his nose. In the Five Towns a man doesn't like to be laughed at . . . . .

ALLAN M. LAING.

Smith (Logan Pearpall) Junior: First Trivium.

I missed the train this morning, of all mornings. It surprised me to find how easy it was. It is even easier to miss a train than to catch it. Of course, the family was annoyed, because I was going to school, and they were hoping they had seen the last of me for a whole term. The affair caused them and me a great deal of unpleasantness and inconvenience. Why did I do it? Really, I hardly know. Was it, perhaps, a sub-conscious desire for a new sensation? After all, what is life but a series of sensations, and why should we not seek them instead of tamely letting them find us?

W. STEWART.

Harrowing of Houseman.

Now Spring is in Long Barrow,
And I am thirteen plus,
They enter me for Harrow
And take me there by bus.
They question me on Pliny,
They ply me with Unseen,
Now Spring is in the spinney
And I am nigh fourteen.
But buses roll and dance, Dad,
And sicken me of Spring,
Till vanished is my chance, Dad,
Of Autumn Harrowing.

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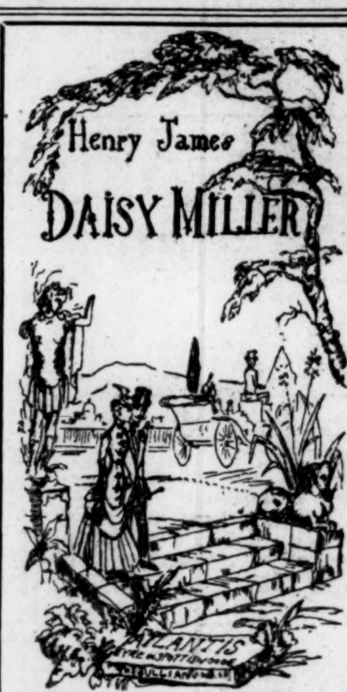

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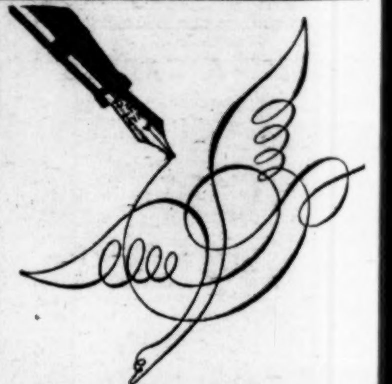

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Appointments Vacant

None of the vacancies in these columns relates to a man between 18 and 50 inclusive or a woman between 18 and 40 inclusive unless he or she is excepted from the provision of the Control of Engagement Order, 1947, or the vacancy is for employment excepted from the provision of that Order.

CIVIL Service Commission. The Civil Service Commissioners invite applics. from male candidates for post of Principal Scientific Officer in Medical Statistical Dept. of the Directorate of Hygiene at the War Office, London. Candidates must be British subjects and must have been born on or before August 1, 1917. Qualifics. and exp. reqd. of candidates are: (1) A First or Second-class Hons. degree in Statistics or in a science subject combined with Statistics. (2) A knowledge of biology or social medicine, or wide exp. in dealing with specific problems associated with Medical statistics. (3) A knowledge of Army medical documentation and procedure would be of special advantage but is not essential. Incl. London salary scale is: £900×£30 to £1,080×£35 to £1,220. This post is permanent with superann. benefits under Federated Superann. System for Universities. Further partics. and applic. forms from Sec., Civil Service Commission, Scientific Branch, 27 Grosvenor Sq. London, W.1, quoting No. 2152, to whom completed applic. forms must be returned by May 28, 1948.

THE Ontario College of Art in Toronto, Canada, invites applics. for position of instructor expd. in practice and teaching of design on the theoretical side and its practical application in industrial and commercial fields, as well as the capability of lecturing and demonstrating. A working knowledge of the properties of materials is necessary and a practical acquaintance with the figurative arts is desirable. Salary $4,000 to $5,000 p.a. for yearly term of nine months. Please apply in writing giving details of training, exp., associations and a short biographical account to Chairman, Council, Ontario College of Art.

A TEAM of enthusiastic architects is to be built up for immediate work on the design of Peterlee, the new Miners' town in Co. Durham. Architects with suitable qualifics. and outlook are needed to participate in the construction of the most modern town in the world. The following posts in the Architect's Dept. are to be filled: Senior Architects, salary £1,000-1,250 p.a. Should have wide general exp. in modern design, and knowledge of office organisation and site supervision. They will be in charge of three different fields of work: organisation and research, planning, and housing and public buildings. Architects: Salary, £750-£1,000 p.a. Must be expd., capable of taking charge of small groups, each working on a specific problem. Assistant Architects: Salary, £600-£750 p.a. Junior Assistant Architects: Salary, £300-£450 p.a. Applics., giving full partics. of exp., should be sent to Chief Architect, B. Lubetkin, Peterlee Development Corporation, c/o Council Offices, Seaham, Co. Durham, not later than June 1.

B.B.C. invites applics. for post of Agricultural Talks Producer, Overseas Services. Duties include acting as agricultural specialist (subject to general guidance of Corporation's Agricultural Liaison Officer) for all Overseas Services in English, the formulation of ideas for and production of talks features on agricultural subjects, and selection and rehearsal of speakers. Essential qualifics. are good theoretical Agricultural training and knowledge of agricultural affairs, an interest in writing for speech and in radio technique. Salary is in grade rising by annual increments of £40 to max. of £890 p.a. Detailed applics. to Appointments Officer, B.B.C., Broadcasting Hse., W.1, marked "Agricultural Talks N.Stm.," within 7 dys. For ackdgmnt. enclose s.a.e.

DEVON C.C. (Medical Dept.). Applics. invited for post of Social Worker in Mental Health on staff of County Medical Officer, who will work under supervision of the County Psychiatrist. Work entailed will be almost entirely with adults and will include visiting and social work in connection with Community care of Mental Defectives, After-Care of Mental Cases, Borderline and cases of Neurosis, etc. Applicants must have had some exp. in one or other branch of Social Work, and pref. given to those with exp. in mental work or in possession of Social Science Cert. or Diploma. Salary according to Natl. Scale Grades I (£390×£15 to £435), II (£420×£15 to £465), III (£450×£15 to £495), according to exp. Appropriate scale of travelling and subsistence allowances in accordance with Devon C.C. scale will be paid, partics. of which can be obtained on applic. For those who do not possess a motor car, the County Council are prepared in approved cases to assist in purchase of a car. Posts will be terminable by three months' notice on either side. Appointment subject to satisfactory medical exam. and Provisions of Local Govt. Superann. Act, 1937. In accordance with Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, other things being equal, pref. given to registered disabled persons within the meaning of the Act. Applicants should state age, address, qualifics. and details of exp. and submit copies of three testimonials, or if none available names of three refs. as soon as possible to County Medical Officer of Health, 8 Dix's Field, Exeter.

UNIVERSITY College, Nottingham. Dept. of Adult Education. Applics. invited for following appointments: (a) Resident Tutor in Derbyshire. Candidates should be Hons. grads. with some teaching and organising or admin. exp., pref. in Adult Education. Initial sal. £500-£600 according to qualifics. (b) Tutor in the Assistant Lecturer Grade to conduct extra-mural classes and courses. Sal. scale £400-£450. Conditions of appointments and forms of applics. obtainable from Registrar, University College, Nottingham.

Appointments Vacant—continued

B.B.C. invites applics. for post of Assistant-in-Charge, Overseas Audience Research Unit. Duties include planning radio listening investigations among Dominion, Colonial and British Forces overseas audiences both by postal questionnaires and through Overseas Representatives. Work involves keeping statistics of short wave programmes rebroadcast by overseas stations and collecting information from correspondence and written sources. Knowledge of technique of assessing public opinion essential. Some knowledge of or interest in the Empire desirable. Salary is in a grade rising by annual increments of £40 to a maximum of £890 p.a. Detailed applics. to Appointments Officer, B.B.C., Broadcasting House, London, W.1, marked "Overseas Research, N. Stm.," within 7 days. For acknowledgment enclose s.a.e.

B.B.C. invites applics. for post of Senior Sub-Editor in Monitoring Service News Bureau at Caversham, near Reading. Work includes the copytasting and sub-editing of news intercepted from foreign broadcasts for use by B.B.C. News Departments. Duties involve shift work. A wide knowledge of foreign affairs and sub-editing exp. are essential qualifics. Salary is in a grade rising by annual increments of £45 to a max. of £995 p.a. Detailed applics. to Appointments Officer, B.B.C., Broadcasting House, London, W.1, marked "Senior Sub-Editor, Caversham, N. Stm.," within 7 days. For acknowledgment enclose s.a.e.

B.B.C. invites applics. from men only of British nationality for appointment as announcer-trainees. Candidates should be between ages of 23 and 35 and have reached at least matric. standard in general education. A knowledgeable interest in literature, current affairs and music is important and the ability to pronounce French, German and Italian correctly is essential. Candidates' speech should be of good standard and free from affectation, diction clear but without undue precision, voice resonant and flexible, delivery fluent and unmannered. Announcer-trainees should be prepared to undertake shift work in any part of the U.K. Salary during minimum training period of three months is from £380 to £530 p.a. according to age, qualifics. and general exp. on entry. Salary of a qualified announcer is normally in a grade rising to a maximum of £890 p.a., but exceptionally is in a higher grade. Detailed applics. to Appointments Officer, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, marked "Announcer-trainee N.Stm.," within 7 days. For acknowledgment enclose stamped addressed envelope.

L.C.C. Reqd. in day schools for partially sighted children in London, qualified Assistant Teachers (men and women). Burnham scale salary plus two increments carried beyond the maximum. Applic. forms from Education Officer (T.S.5), County Hall, S.E.1 (s.a.e. necessary), returnable by May 22. Canvassing disqualifies. (825.)

CENTRAL Training Council in Child Care. Applics. invited from men and women who wish to train as visiting officers in services covered by the new Children Bill, e.g., boarding out, adoption and after care. Pref. will be given to candidates between ages of 21 to 40 who should be graduates and/or trained in social science, teaching, health visiting, institutional management or have comparable qualifics. Candidates should prefy. have some exp. of general social work or of work with children or young people. Training courses during session 1948-49 will be held at a number of Universities and at London School of Economics and will cover a period of 12 months, of which 4 months will be devoted to practical work. Grants will be available in suitable cases to cover cost of fees, maintenance and incidental expenses. Full partics. from Secretary, Central Training Council in Child Care, Room 418, Home Office, Whitehall, S.W.1. Closing date for applics. is May 17, 1948.

WEST of England College of Art, Queens Road, Bristol (Regional Art College). Principal, D. E. Milner, A.R.C.A., R.W.A. Applics. invited for following posts on teaching staff of College. (1) Teacher of modelling and sculpture. Person appointed would be required assist Head of Dept. Essential he should be an artist and possess sound practical knowledge of his craft including casting. (2) Teacher of fabric printing and design. Candidates should have sound general knowledge of craft and in addition should be able to assist in Dept. of Dress Design of which fabric printing is branch. Burnham Technical Scale salary. Forms of applic. obtainable by forwarding stamped addressed foolscap env. to Chief Education Officer, Council House, College Green, Bristol, 1, should be returned completed to Principal at above address as soon as possible.

PETERBOROUGH, Westwood House School. Wanted, September, graduate Assistant Mistress and young graduate Assistant Master to divide teaching English, Geography, History, up to school cert. with Senior girls, the Master also to take charge of boys in Preparatory. Recog. Burnham. Govt. superann.

REQD. in Sept. in Recognised Girls' Boarding School, Grad. Mistress to teach Science, and/or Maths. Resident post. Burnham scale with usual deductions. Principal, West Heath, Sevenoaks, Kent.

ORGANISERS wanted by The National Council of Labour Colleges. One for the South Wales area (centre Cardiff) sal. £400 p.a., and one for the South London area sal. £425 p.a. Must be competent lecturers and organisers. Applics. to J. P. M. Millar, Gen. Sec., N.C.L.C., Tillicoultry, Scotland.

SHORTHAND-Typist, interesting Social Service work of National Importance. Experienced Committee Minutes, good speeds essential. Write details to: The General Secretary, British Council for Rehabilitation, 32 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.1.

Appointments Vacant—continued

SOCIAL Work in Rural Areas. Land Settlement Assoc. Ltd., have vacancy for a woman between 28 and 40 yrs. of age to undertake social work on their Estates at Sidlesham and Batchmere, Nr. Chichester, Sussex. Starting sal. £345 p.a. Post is pensionable. Further partics. and applic. form from Community Service Sec., Land Settlement Assoc., Ltd., 43 Cromwell Rd. London, S.W.7.

WANTED for women's professional organisation, young progressive woman to work part-time in office and part-time as travelling organiser. Shorthand-typing essential. Salary £250-£300. Box 3258.

SUPERINTENDENT for Family Planning Association Clinic, E.C.1. 34-hour week. Sal. £350 p.a., rising to £400. Box 3660.

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